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APULEIUS AND DRAMA

THE ASS ON STAGE



Regine May

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Apuleius and Drama

The Ass on Stage

REGINE MAY

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R. M.

August 2005

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A Note on Texts and Translations

Unless otherwise stated, I have used the Bibliotheca Teubneriana editions for Apuleius by permission of K. G. Saur, Munich and Leipzig: *Metamorphoses* Helm (3rd edn, 1931), *Apologia (De Magia)* Helm (4th edn, 1963), *Florida* Helm (1959). Fragments and quotations from the philosophical works, unless stated otherwise, follow Beaujeu (1973).

The quotations from Plautus follow the Oxford Classical Texts edition in two volumes by Lindsay (1904–5). Fronto's works are quoted according to the page numbers in van den Hout (1988).

Translations from Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* follow Walsh (1994) by permission of Oxford University Press and of the author, from the *Apologia* Hunink (by permission of Oxford University Press and of the author), from the *Florida* Hilton, and from *De Deo Socratis* Harrison in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink (2001). Translations from the younger Seneca and *Octavia* follow Fitch (Loeb, 2002–4). Translations from Gellius follow the Loeb edition by Rolfe (1961), and from Fronto that by Haines (1919–20). Unless indicated otherwise, all other translations are my own.

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Abbreviations

Classical authors and their works are cited following *A Greek–English Lexicon*, compiled by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott; revised by Henry Stuart Jones; with a supplement (Oxford, 1968) for Greek authors; and *ThlL* for Latin authors.

Abbreviations for journals follow *L' Année Philologique*.

<i>CIL</i>	Mommsen, Th. et al. (eds.), <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (Berlin, 1863–).
<i>CLE</i>	Bücheler, F. and E. Lommatzsch (eds.), <i>Carmina Latina Epigraphica</i> (Stuttgart, 1895–1926).
<i>GCN</i>	<i>Groningen Colloquia on the Novel</i> .
<i>IG</i>	Kirchhoff, Kaibel, et al. (eds.), <i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> (2. Aufl., Berlin, 1873–).
<i>ILS</i>	Dessau, H. (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> (Berlin, 1892–1914).
<i>Insc.It.</i>	Unione Accademia Nazionale (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Italiae</i> (Rome, 1931/2–).
<i>K.–A.</i>	Kassel, Rudolf and Colin Austin (eds.), <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> , 8 vols (Berlin, 1983–).
<i>LIMC</i>	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> (Zurich, 1988).
<i>OCD</i>	Hornblower, Simon, and Antony Spawforth (eds.), <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> , (3rd edn. Oxford 1999).
<i>OLD</i>	P. G. W. Glare (ed.), <i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> (Oxford, 1982).
<i>P.Oxy.</i>	B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, et al., <i>The Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> (London, 1898–).
<i>PHI</i>	Packard Humanities Institute, <i>Latin Authors and Bible Versions</i> [CD-Rom 5.3] (Los Altos, Calif., 1991).
<i>RE</i>	Wissowa, G. et al. (eds.), <i>Paulys Real-Encyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Stuttgart, 1893–).
<i>SHA</i>	<i>Scriptores Historiae Augustae</i> .
<i>ThlL</i>	<i>Thesaurus linguae Latinae</i> (Munich, 1900–).
<i>TrGF</i>	Snell, Bruno, Stefan Radt, and Richard Kannicht (eds.), <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> (Göttingen, 1971–2004).

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Introduction

1.1. APULEIUS AND DRAMA: THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

Apuleius is generally, and rightly, credited with a strong interest in both contemporary and archaic literature. He demonstrates this in his philosophical works, which teem with literary quotations, in his rhetorical works and speeches, which talk about ancient genres or use literary quotations for many reasons, and primarily in his novel, *Metamorphoses*. In this book, I intend to analyse how Apuleius uses one particular genre, drama, throughout his works. Drama is a wide field, and it ranges from tragedy to comedy, from mime to pantomime. This book not only sets out to show that Apuleius makes use of drama, but also tries to establish in what ways he does it, which type of drama is his main intertext, and whether there is an underlying pattern in the employment of this particular intertext. Comedy, especially Roman comedy, will be shown to be a major influence on Apuleius, especially in his novel.

In his commentary on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* (1.2.7f.), the philosopher Macrobius (praetorian prefect of Italy AD 430) describes a clear connection between ancient comedy and Petronius and Apuleius: all three are fictional, said to have similar effects on their readers, and are meant either to please the audience's ears or to improve their morals:

Fabulae, quarum nomen indicat falsi professionem, aut tantum conciliandae auribus voluptatis, aut adhortationibus quoque in bonam frugem gratia repertae sunt. Auditum mulcent vel comoediae, quales Menander eiusve imitatores agendas dederunt, vel argumenta fictis casibus amatorum referta, quibus vel multum se Arbiter exercuit vel Apuleium non numquam luisse miramur.

(*Fabulae* (stories)—the word itself indicates a declaration of their fictionality—are found either merely to gratify the ears, or to exhort the reader to good deeds. Comedies delight the ear, too, such as Menander and his imitators wrote for performance, or *argumenta* (narratives) full of fictitious cases of lovers, in which (Petronius) Arbiter often exercised himself, or with which Apuleius surprisingly sometimes toyed.)

Thus, both comedy and Apuleius' novel were seen to have a similar effect on their audiences already in Late Antiquity,¹ but so far no thorough study of the relationship between drama in general and comedy in particular on Apuleius' novel has been offered by the increasing number of scholars dealing with the Latin novel.² Macrobius parallels Apuleius' approach to fiction to that of 'Menander and his imitators'; I argue that it is above all Menander's 'imitator' Plautus who forms the main source for the elements of comedy found in Apuleius' novel.

One problem connected with this argument, a common one in research on Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, is the question of its lost Greek original. Thus one of the questions involved in this study is whether or not the comic elements were already there in Apuleius' lost original, the *Μεταμορφώσεις* (*Metamorphoseis*) of the so-called 'Loukios of Patrae'. In order to tackle this problem, and because of the loss of the Greek original (apart from a short and arguably misleading summary in Photios and an epitome, the pseudo-Lucianic *Onos*), one has to turn to a method employed in Plautine studies, which deal with similar problems, that is, the reconstruction of a lost Greek (often Menandrian) original and its relation with its adaptation by a Roman playwright (often Plautus).³

I would like to argue that Apuleius takes Plautus' ideas of adaptation of Greek models into Latin to heart, and attempts something similar to Plautus' 'Demophilus scripsit, Maccus vortit barbare' ('Demophilus wrote it, Maccus translated it into barbarian [i.e. Latin]'; Plaut. *Asin.* 11; cf. *Trin.* 19), an adaptation of a Greek original for a Latin-speaking audience, with all the changes in structure and plot that such an adaptation implies.

Within drama, comedy is prevalent in Apuleius. Plautus was highly appreciated in Apuleius' time for his archaic language. In the popular-philosophical writings of that period comedy is discussed theoretically, and even in the philosophical works of Apuleius, who sees himself mainly as a Platonic philosopher, a *philosophus Platonicus*, there are quotations from Plautus and his successor Terence. In the *Florida* and the *Apologia*, too, Apuleius, as will be shown, uses both the language and the motifs of comedy,⁴ and he even boasts that he has written works of all genres in both Greek and Latin.

¹ Holzberg (1995: 8).

² Surveys: Bowie and Harrison (1993), Holzberg (1995), Harrison (1999); Greek novels: Swain (1999). — However, there are studies of the influence of Greek comedy on the Greek ideal novel, cf. Paulsen (1992).

³ Fundamental: Fraenkel (1922) and (1960); cf. Zagagi (1980). A list of the techniques involved e.g. in Thierfelder (1962: 11f). A good summary: Lowe (1992).

⁴ A discussion of the comic citations in the philosophical works and a (preliminary) analysis of comic stock characters in the *Apologia*: Hunink (1998).

The *Metamorphoses* as a fully fledged fictional text may then show even freer use of drama in general and comedy in particular in its literary texture.

The use of the term 'comedy' may be misleading: 'comic' does not necessarily indicate the same as 'humorous'; it is here used as a generic term, to indicate elements derived from 'comedy'. Some elements of New Comedy, for example the exposure of unwanted babies, are 'comic' since they are a stock motif, but not risible or funny.

Starting with the issue of which dramatic texts Apuleius may have known, I shall attempt an overview of the corpus of texts which he may have used, and explore in what format he may have known this material, that is, whether from reading habits or from watching plays performed in the theatres of Athens, Carthage, and Rome in his time. Apuleius' use of dramatic literature ties in closely with his classification as an archaizer, and an analysis is also needed of how Apuleius fits into this literary movement of his time.

A scrutiny of the citations of drama in the other works of Apuleius (both the philosophical treatises and the speeches, including the *Apologia*)⁵ tries to elucidate whether Apuleius quotes ancient dramatic authors verbatim or adapts them for his own purposes; the result of this will be used to describe his mode of adaptation in the novel.

The tone of the novel is set in the prologue, which has been shown to be inspired by Plautine prologues,⁶ and the texture of the novel will be investigated for elements taken from the dramatic genres to keep up a comic tone throughout the *Metamorphoses*. Tragedy needs to be taken into account as well as comedy, since the latter often reuses and comicizes elements of the former. Thus the relation between tragedy and comedy often becomes blurred, paratragic, and Apuleius' mixing of the two will be detectable time and again in this study. At the other end of the scale, mime and its relevance to the *Metamorphoses* needs to be considered. Often it may be impossible to ascertain whether it is mime or Plautine comedy which underlies a particular feature of the novel; in such a case one might speak of the influence of theatrical genres. Many examples of humorous scenes may be perceived of as 'dramatic' generally, leaving it open whether their comicality ultimately derives from mime or from comedy. Furthermore, if a parallel from comedy is quoted, this is not intended to indicate that Apuleius necessarily alludes to

⁵ The genuineness of some of Apuleius' works is debated; in this book I take the following works to be by Apuleius: *Metamorphoses*, *Apologia*, *Florida*, *De Deo Socratis*, *De Platone et eius Dogmate*, *De Mundo*, and several smaller poems. I also consider *Peri Hermeneias* to be genuine, *pace* the arguments in Harrison (2000: 11f.), but do not analyse it, since no dramatic elements could be traced in it.

⁶ Smith (1972=1999: n. 10).

that particular scene. Much ancient drama is lost, and Apuleius may have had comedy, or, even more generally, theatre from tragedy through comedy to mime in mind.⁷

Van Mal-Maeder (2001: 28), wisely warns against wanting to see one particular intertext underlying any part of the story. She singles out the farcical-mimic description of Diophanes (*Met.* 2.13) and the seduction scenes (*Met.* 2.7 and 2.10), with their Plautine echoes, as comic, but warns against seeing references to particular intertexts alone.

Thus some scenes of the *Metamorphoses* need to be analysed more closely. The main narrative can be shown to contain dramatic elements, mainly in the characterization of the protagonists and the situations they find themselves in. It needs to be asked whether Apuleius follows a pattern in associating his characters with drama, what his methods in doing so are, and what might be the function of such associations in the overall context of the novel.

The inserted tales in the *Metamorphoses*, which partly function as a mirror or warning for the protagonists, feature drama, too: the *mise en abyme* *Cupid and Psyche* can be analysed along the lines of comedy,⁸ and some of the adultery tales in Book 10 of the *Metamorphoses* display an interesting switch of genres from comedy to tragedy and the other way round.

The final chapter will then deal with the function of Isis in the novel, seen from the perspective of an overall use of drama for characterization and scene-setting throughout the novel. If a pattern of intertextuality between the two genres, drama and novel, can be established, the further question arises of whether its presence is only to form an ornamental addition to a generally rich texture, or whether there may be specific literary or other (for example, religious) purposes for its introduction.

1.2. SCHOLARSHIP AND METHODOLOGY

Studies of drama in Apuleius are scarce. As far as the influence of Greek drama is concerned, Mason's studies still form the standard analysis: Mason (1978) lists many influences in his discussion of the Greek sources of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. The primary source is the *Μεταμορφώσεις*, but

⁷ On the problem of 'allusion' and 'intertext' and determining their meaning and context cf. Finkelpearl (1998: 3ff.).

⁸ Generally on the *Metamorphoses* Wlosok (1969=1999). *Cupid and Psyche*: Frangoulidis (1997: 145–77).

influences of the *Milesian Tales*, the ideal Greek romance, myth and folklore, and the fable can also be found.⁹ The last genre in his list is drama.¹⁰

In his brief but useful discussion, influenced by Trenkner (1958), Mason lists the obvious references to some theatrical genres, such as the influence of pantomime¹¹ on the Paris play in the theatre at Corinth (*Met.* 10.30–2). Tragedy, first and foremost Euripidean drama, is also evident, but not in the foreground, as Mason argues. He quotes *Met.* 10.2f. ‘scito te tragoediam non fabulam legere’ (‘You should know [...] that you are now to read a tragedy’) to show that Apuleius is aware of tragedy, and the adultery tale which follows this introduction is influenced by the Phaedra and Hippolytos tragedies. Trenkner¹² finds isolated references to tragedies in certain scenes, although some of these scenes are actually already traceable to Apuleius’ lost Greek original, for example the Pasiphae story. Thus it is not clear whether Apuleius himself was directly influenced by Euripides or has just followed the humorous references already found in his source. Furthermore, these Euripidean *fabulae* had already been subject to redrafting in other works. Seneca, for example, composes versions of Euripidean tragedy, for example *Phaedra*, which will be shown to be an important intertext in Book 10, so that it is not always easy to ascertain whether the influence is Greek, Roman, or generic, especially when there is only a brief reference to a character used in tragedy.

However, Greek New Comedy influence, either direct or indirect through Latin adaptations, will be shown to be traceable in the *Metamorphoses*, although Mason judges the influence of Greek New Comedy as not very important.¹³ As to the use of comic stock characters, he thinks that Lucius might bear some resemblance to the *adulescens* (the comic young man), Milo to the typical *philargyros* (miser), but not in detail, and dismisses the idea that Photis might have many things in common with the *ancilla* or servant girl.

⁹ *Milesian Tales*: p. 7f.; Greek romance: p. 8f.; myth and folklore: p. 9f.; fable: p. 10.

¹⁰ Mason (1978: 10f.).

¹¹ Mason (1978: 10f.) describes the pantomime of the Paris myth at the theatre of Corinth (*Met.* 10.30–2a) as a mime. On the unusual nature of this performance cf. Webb (2002: 287). Cf. also Hall (2002: 12ff. on types of performance during the 2nd cent., and p. 27f. on pantomime); Fick-Michel (1991: 118f. on pantomime, 115ff. on mime and its prevalence in the 2nd cent.), and Jory (2002: 240) on the history of pantomime.

¹² pp. 48, 57, 61: Charite’s suicide (*Met.* 8.13) with reference to *Helen*, ‘Pasiphae’ (*Met.* 10.19) to the lost *Kressai*, the poison-cup incident (*Met.* 10.25) to *Ion*. Furthermore, allusions to particular Euripidean versions of tragic stories may be referred to, e.g. in *Met.* 1.10 (Medea), and *Met.* 4.26 (Protesilaos).

¹³ Mason (1978: 11): ‘with the possible exception of the *Perikeiromene*, there is little to suggest that New Comedy was especially important in Apuleius’ mind when he wrote the *Golden Ass*.’—This statement is repeated in Mason (1999: 109), with a reference to the ‘trap for the unwary’ set by introducing this well-known comic setting with a tragic ending.

These personalities, however, are built on comic stock characters, and, as I will argue, they are formed rather through the influence of Plautus than through the influence of Menander. Mason sees a reworking of Menander's *Perikeiromene* in the tale of the brother and sister in *Met.* 10.23–8, partly because the comedy seems to be set in Corinth.¹⁴ This analysis, too, will receive some modification in the course of this book. Furthermore, the novel's short and humorous references to mythology, for example *Geryoneae caedis* ('the slaughter of Geryon'; *Met.* 2.32), *meum Bellerophontem* ('my Bellerophon'; *Met.* 7.26) etc., recall the similar use of such references in Greek New Comedy.¹⁵ Finally, the names of some characters are identifiable with certain names in New Comedy, for example Demeas and possibly Pamphile.

The technique Apuleius employs when adapting the Greek novel to produce a Latin one, as will be shown, resembles that of Plautus in adapting a Greek play.¹⁶ The difference between Greek comedy and its Latin adaptations is obvious, and Apuleius, who in other works shows some preference for Latin over Greek literature in general and some special liking for Plautus, may easily have included some typically Roman, Plautine, features.

The influence of Plautus on Apuleius may be detected mainly on two levels, and both will be studied in detail in the course of this book. The first is Apuleius' use of archaic and specifically Plautine language, which has been researched mainly by Desertine and Callebat.¹⁷ The former's study consists of word lists comparing Apuleius' lexical level with that of Plautus. Callebat in several publications analyses Apuleius' conscious use of Plautine language, which he says cannot be explained only by the archaizer's interest in extinct Plautine words, or by a substrate of archaic language surviving in the sub-literary *sermo cotidianus* ('everyday speech') into the language of the second century. Plautus, he argues, has been used not only for finding the right word, but also to establish a comic context.

On the second level, the use of comic motifs, little work has been done on the novel as a whole. Feldbrugge treats the comic element in the *Metamorphoses*,¹⁸ but is concerned not so much with comic intertextuality as with the

¹⁴ Trenkner (1958: 93f.).

¹⁵ Mason (1978) compares Men. *Dysk.* 153, *Sam.* 495f.

¹⁶ Mazzarino (1950: 143f.) touches on this problem when discussing Apuleius' changes in the names of the novel's characters when adapting the *Metamorphoseis*.

¹⁷ Desertine (1898); Callebat (1968), (1998).—The study by Sidey (1909) concentrates on Plautus', Petronius', and Apuleius' use of the participle, because all three authors employ versions of the *sermo cotidianus*.

¹⁸ Feldbrugge (1939). Stephenson (1964: 88) compares Lucius and the young men from Terence: 'both try in their works to show the education of young men for a better state of being.' Stephenson generally argues for some pointed differences between Terence and Apuleius, based on his theory that Terence writes comedies of character, while Apuleius writes a comedy of fate.

broader concept of humour. Frangoulidis analyses the *Metamorphoses* with the help of Greimas' actantial model, and also uses dramatic metaphors in his analysis, but he is not so much interested in Apuleius' use of Plautus as in the roles and deceptions acted out by Apuleius' characters. Some scholars have also looked at isolated scenes of the *Metamorphoses*, without considering the text as a whole.¹⁹

Recently, primarily epic allusions and intertexts in the *Metamorphoses* have been studied, mainly by Harrison,²⁰ Frangoulidis (1992), and Finkelpearl (1998), who conclude that their main function is the reader's entertainment (Harrison) or the inversion of the seriousness of the epic genre (Frangoulidis). Finkelpearl, although she studies a much wider range of allusions, still concentrates mainly on allusions to Vergil. In the course of this study, I shall take into account how and why Apuleius may make use of the other 'serious' genre, tragedy.

Hinds (1998) argues for a wider approach to allusion, since, owing to the fluctuation between conscious allusion and accidental 'confluence', the value of a single allusion may be difficult to decide; furthermore, the problem of multiple allusions exists for Apuleius, too (very noticeably, for example, in the 'Phaedra' story in *Met.* 10, cf. Ch. 11.2 below). I would, however, like to take the occurrence of Plautine lexical clusters as 'signposts' for allusion, as markers to indicate intertextuality.²¹ Thus, in the course of this book, linguistic markers will be taken to guide the reader towards scenes adapted from comedy or tragedy. Apuleius and his contemporaries deliberately study and reuse the language of archaic poetry and drama. Fronto and Gellius discuss the uses of words and dramatic contexts, and Apuleius, as part of the literary élite in the Second Sophistic, is likely to have emulated such scholars, researching bygone periods and using their language and literature for his own literary purposes. Apuleius' approach, especially in the *Metamorphoses*, is to draw on a wide range of drama:

The incorporation of elements from the ancient stage displays a striking instance of the varied motives to be found in the *Golden Ass*. It alternates between the austere dignity of Greek tragedy and the coarse farce of sensuously staged Roman mime. The typical ancient Greek novels regularly invoke dramatic metaphors and themes derived from the Athenian tragic stage. Their attitude towards the earlier form is without exception reverential.²²

¹⁹ Frangoulidis (2001), reviewed by May (2001). Single scenes of the *Met.*: Shanzer (1996) on Book 1; Frangoulidis (1997) on *Cupid and Psyche*.

²⁰ Harrison (1990b), (1997), (1998), (2000: 222f.); Finkelpearl (1998).

²¹ 'Signposting': Hinds (1998: 1–16).

²² Thus Sandy (1997: 250).

Unlike the Greek novels, Apuleius' approach is much wider: his intertextual references include tragedy, comedy, and mime, but owing to his interest in archaic Latin it is especially the Roman theatre, and primarily the language of Plautus, which forms a continuous linguistic subtext for his novel. The attitude of Apuleius to the 'earlier form' of drama is more problematic than that of the Greek novelists, and his reverence towards his tragic intertexts may be a matter of debate.

Although using allusion to establish an author's intention is a somewhat old-fashioned approach, I maintain that 'intertext' can only be used meaningfully for interpretation if a certain amount of intent can be detected. Apuleius' style is markedly, and simultaneously, both allusive and elusive; he often juggles with several genres at the same time in the same story, and with varying grades of success. I think that exactly this lack of consistency is intentional, metamorphosing one genre alluded to into another. Finkelpearl (1998) in her study of allusion in the *Metamorphoses* argues that 'surely phrases we look at are sometimes a matter of conscious content and at other times unconsciously evoke the literary tradition'.²³ In trying to establish certain patterns of allusion to one particular genre, drama, I shall try to find out more about Apuleius' methods of using his intertexts.

I will thus look closely at Apuleius' use of Plautine language and style, and align them with the use of stock characters from comedy in order to establish comic intertextuality. One of the methods of enhancing comicality in the *Metamorphoses*, as it seems to me, is the contrast between and merging of genres, especially the dramatic ones, and again it may be instructive to search for patterns there.

In both Harrison's and Frangoulidis' approaches to epic intertexts the idea of the comic tone of the *Metamorphoses* is stressed. If the novel in general leans towards the comic, allusions to comedy not only on the linguistic level but beyond them at the level of motifs and stock characters may greatly enhance the comicality of the novel.

Plautus' comicality, furthermore, is created by several methods, from linguistic games to paratragedy, the inversion of 'serious' literary models, which serves to entertain the audience. In arguing that Apuleius adapted Plautine methods for a purpose, I stress the prevalence of laughter over seriousness in a similar way to the scholars who have, say, seen Lucius as an anti-Odysseus. Comic subversion of serious subject matter is a very Plautine method and its use turns the *Metamorphoses* into a comic novel.

Bakhtin (1981) famously takes the novel to be the only genre still developing in modern times (p. 3), and a reason for this is its adaptability and ability to subsume in itself many other genres, so that the presence of tragedy or

²³ Finkelpearl (1998: 6).

comedy in it should not be taken amiss: the novel as a literary form is so open that it can accommodate other genres, and does so successfully. Above all, it 'parodies other genres (precisely in their role as genres), [...] incorporates other [genres] into its own peculiar structure, reformulating and re-accenting them' (p. 5); he adds, 'Parodic stylizations of canonized genres and styles occupy an essential place in the novel' (p. 6). Apuleius plays with his readers' expectations, and misleads them constantly. Genres metamorphose into each other, and a novel in the Bakhtinian sense is created. Comedy as utilized by Apuleius ceases to be just comedy: Apuleius appropriates it by changing recognizable elements of comedy in the course of his plot. Since, however, comedy and the comic novel are both perfect expressions of the 'carnival-esque', in the Bakhtinian sense,²⁴ of a force unifying society in festive laughter, the allusions to Plautus stand out from other allusions; in addition to enhancing the literary depth of the novel they also seem to indicate Apuleius' favourite choice of method.

I assume that at the time of Apuleius' writing of the novel a certain genre-consciousness existed²⁵—at various levels, from the three basic literary genres mentioned in Aristotle's *Poetics* to the finest distinctions detectable in Augustan poetry.²⁶ Our concept of genre arises out of constant comparison with other texts of the same genre:

Every literary text is made up of a number of 'systems' (lexical, graphic, metrical, phonological and so on), and gains its effects through constant clashes and tensions between these systems. Each of the systems comes to represent a 'norm' from which the others deviate, setting up a code of expectations which they transgress.²⁷

Digression from this set norm, or set expectation, what Lotman calls a 'minus device', may generate meaning, too, when absence of an element of this system is explicitly noticeable. Eagleton²⁸ argues that 'the literary work, indeed, is a continual generating and violating of expectations, a complex interplay of the regular and the random, norms and deviations, routinized patterns and dramatic defamiliarizations'. Apuleius' novel is especially rich in this kind of literary game: Apuleius constantly builds up a certain generic expectation, just to thwart this expectation and create his own specific meaning out of the unexpected and the deviation.

²⁴ Novel: Bakhtin (1984); comedy: Segal (1987).

²⁵ A similar point is made by Finkelpearl (1998). Selden (1994) warns against the impossibility of determining exact intertexts. Still, I take it that linguistic parallels to Plautus indicate a *conscious* reference to the playwright.

²⁶ Cf. Conte (1994). Cf. the arrangement by genre in ancient libraries, discussed by Horsfall (1993: 61f.) with reference to Quintilian.

²⁷ Thus Eagleton (1996: 86f.), summarizing the argument of Lotman (1977).

²⁸ Eagleton (1996: 89).

In many respects I thus agree with the analysis in Finkelpearl's excellent study, but there are also some differences between our approaches. She proposes 'that [Apuleius' novel] represents an experimentation with various genres in an attempt to find the novel's place and begins to represent a struggle as the book progresses, a struggle that is resolved in Book 11' (p. 35). My concern is not so much with reconstructing a conscious attempt by Apuleius to create a novelistic genre out of other existing genres, but with the playfulness with which he uses these genres, primarily comedy, to create a certain sense of unity in his own work. Comedy is a self-conscious genre to start with, full of allusions to and parodies of other genres, ranging from tragedy to epic,²⁹ and thus a useful and suitable model for Apuleius' novel, which likewise subsumes several other genres into itself. Like the comedies of Plautus and Terence, Apuleius' novel is an adaptation of a Greek original, and Latin comedy offers him a precedent and model for an adaptation of a Greek into a Latin text. Furthermore, I doubt that Book 11 offers a solution to the question of the novel's genre, as Finkelpearl (1998) argues; instead, the confusion created above all by the repeated false sense of closure, as opposed to the closural moves found in the genres Apuleius alludes to, precisely *prevents* us from seeing Book 11 as a resolution of the work's generic problem. I take it as the ultimate elusion of interpretation.

1.3. COMEDY, MIME, AND THE NOVEL

Besides Roman comedy, there is another dramatic comic genre available to Apuleius. Mime, which Apuleius certainly watched in the theatre,³⁰ has been shown to be influential on Petronius,³¹ and has been argued also to be influential on Apuleius. It is evident in the use of stock persons and scenes

²⁹ Epic is parodied e.g. in *Amph.* 153ff.

³⁰ Cf. *Flor.* 4.3: Sed ferret aequo animo hanc nominum communionem, si mimos spectavisset: animadverteret illic paene simili purpura alios praesidere, alios vapulare.

(But he would have put up with the sharing of the name [i.e. the name 'piper' with the horn-players of undertakers] with equanimity if he had been a spectator of mimes. There he would see some presiding in the auditorium and others being whipped there, although they wore almost the same purple clothing.)

³¹ Cf. Walsh (1970: 24–8); Beare (1964: Ch. 18); Panayotakis (1995); Friedländer (1919–21: 2.442): 'vielleicht entlehnte die Posse um so mehr von der kunstmäßigen Komödie, je mehr sie diese auf der Bühne verdrängte'. On the novel and mime in general cf. Reich (1903: 35); on Apuleius cf. most recently Andreassi (1997). More general on mime in Latin (primarily Augustan) literature: Reynolds (1946); McKeown (1979); Fantham (1988–9). For early bibliography on the relation between mime and comedy cf. Wüst in *RE* (1932) s.v. 'Mimos', col. 1743; Rawson (1991: 468–87).

as well as language. Possible passages inspired by mime include the adultery tale of the Fuller's wife (*Met.* 9.23ff.), which may have been inspired by Laberius' *Fullo*.³² Walsh even argues that the tale of Thelyphron may go back to a mime.³³ The influence of popular mime on Apuleius is very evident in the adultery tales in Book 9, about which much work has been done in recent years.³⁴ In this book (cf. Ch. 6) I shall look instead at the use of mime in *Metamorphoses* 1. Butts of mime are not unlike Menandrian or Plautine stock types, for example characters who are 'morosum, superstitiosum, suspiciosum, gloriosum, stultum: naturae ridentur ipsae' ('peevish, superstitious, suspicious, vainglorious, stupid: the characters' natures themselves are laughed at'; Cic. *De Orat.* 2.251).

The comparative scarcity of surviving material from mime makes the assessment of its influence on Apuleius difficult for the modern scholar to demonstrate, and another problem in assessing the importance of mime for the comic texture in Apuleius' works is the flexibility of the mime genre. It is very varied, ranging from crude, sketchily drafted and improvised scenes to well-scripted libretti (cf. Plut. *Moralia* 712e).³⁵

By the late Republic and the first and second centuries AD, while the improvised mime continued to flourish, mimes had also developed into a more literary form in the hands of the writers Decimus Laberius and Publilius Syrus.³⁶ The genre involved not only libretto words, but also the actor's action, song and dance with much gesticulation. Literary mime and comedy had some features in common.³⁷ In the late empire, even mimes with mythological themes are attested, although it is still controversial how frequent they were.³⁸ These joined the usual mime themes portraying everyday life. Mimes provided the most common dramatic entertainment in Apuleius' time (cf. for example, *Flor.* 4, 5 and 18.10 for his own references to mimes). Often, however, when Apuleius mentions mimes as taking place in the theatre, he describes comedy and tragedy as occurring on the same stage. Mime, as well as the more literary dramatic genres, seems for him to be only one of many possible incarnations of drama acted out on the contemporary stage. In this analysis, mime will feature as an intertext to be analysed, but so will tragedy and primarily comedy. Of the several dramatic genres of the empire,

³² Cf. Guardì (1978) for *fullones* in comedy.

³³ Mime in Apuleius: Hijmans et al. (1985: 214) on 8.25; Winkler (1985: 160–5, 287–91); Fick-Michel (1991: 115f.).

³⁴ On the adultery mime cf. Kehoe (1984); Reynolds (1946). On the use of adultery mime in Apuleius *Met.* 9 cf. especially Mattiacci (1996).

³⁵ Plutarch distinguishes between two mime types, the *hypothesis* and the *paignion*. The former has a long and complex plot, the latter is a low form of buffoonery, cf. Webb (2002: 288) with further literature.

³⁶ Much that is said here is indebted to Panayotakis (1995: p. xii ff.); cf. Bonaria (1965: 3f.).

³⁷ Fantham (1988–89: 155) traces this development back to the period after 173 bc.

³⁸ Cf. Horsfall (2003: 58) on the frequency of mythological references in ancient drama.

tragedy and comedy are the higher genres, pantomimes and mimes were usually not considered as high literature.³⁹ Comedy, furthermore, would have been regarded as relatively prestigious, especially during the Second Sophistic,⁴⁰ which shows an overall revival of interest in Plautus amongst the literary élite.

An example of the problem of attribution to a specific genre is the comic use of mythology in Apuleius, which could have several forerunners: tragedy itself, mime, comedy, and even *phlyaces*, which also portrayed comic inversions of mythological themes.⁴¹ Ridicule of mythological themes and figures, occasionally found in mime,⁴² also occurs in comedy, namely (among surviving plays) in Plautus' *Amphitruo*. It will be shown, through verbal parallels, that, at least in some instances, comedy may be the most important intertext.

Mime and comedy have several features in common, so that a certain amount of overlap within the two comic genres is unavoidable. The metres used in the literary mimes of Laberius and Publilius Syrus are iambic senarii and trochaic septenarii, the commonest metres of comedy. There are mimes and comedies with similar titles, and perhaps even their plot might share some similarities: Laberius' *Aulularia*, *Colax*, or *Gemelli*, as well as Valerius' *Phormio* (Bonaria (1955–6: 191)), and the *Phasma* of an anonymous author, demonstrate this to be a common phenomenon. These mime titles also indicate that mime and comedy have some stock characters and themes in common. Mimes feature the parasite⁴³, the drunken old hag, lovers, flatterers, slaves, cooks, innkeepers, adulterers, the mother-in-law, foolish scholars, young lovers and jealous husbands,⁴⁴ types also portrayed in Plautus. Thus it is possible that some of the plots and scenes here presented as comic may actually derive from a version of a *mimus*; similarly, something that Apuleius would call 'tragic' may have come to his notice through reading tragedies or watching pantomime performed.⁴⁵

³⁹ Cf. Plut. *Quaest. Conv.* 7.8.3 (712a–c) for New Comedy, and Plin. *Epist.* 1.15.2; 3.1.9; 7.24.4–6; 9.17.2f.; 9.36.4 who prefers comedians, lyristae, and recitals, but not *scurrae* or pantomimes. Cf. Leppin (1992: 157).

⁴⁰ Cf. Hunter (2000) on the Second Sophistic's predilection for Menander.

⁴¹ Cf. Trendall (1967: 15–17); on the problem generally cf. Taplin (1993: 79–88).

⁴² For ridiculing of mythological figures through mimes cf. Wüst in *RE* (1932: 1752, cols. 9–22); Rosenblüth (1909: 44f.).

⁴³ Cf. Sen. *Nat.* 4a. *praef.* 12.

⁴⁴ Mime titles include e.g. Laberius' *Piscator* and *Restio*, all of which could be feasible titles for Roman adaptations of New Comedy. Cf. also Choricus *Apol. Mim.* 110 and Panayotakis (1995: p. xviii).

⁴⁵ The pantomime was introduced into Rome from the Greek East under Augustus (Leppin (1992: 27)) and replaces tragedy in the Latin world, whilst in the Greek world Greek tragedies were still being written and performed. Cf. also Jory (1981). On the continued popularity of mimes in the empire cf. Horsfall (2003: 60 with notes).

In the case of tragedy, problems of terminology may complicate our use of the evidence, since there is not always a generic distinction in the sources between the terminology for 'tragedy' and 'pantomime':⁴⁶ the performance of pantomime was often called tragedy,⁴⁷ and pantomimes took over in many respects the transmission of tragic plots and motifs.⁴⁸ This dilemma however does not exist for comedy, where the distinction in terminology between comedy and mime is clear-cut. The other difficulties, however, remain.

For a contemporary audience, watching a play on stage, a mime and a comedy would have been immediately distinguishable, since the performance differed greatly: mime actors did not wear masks, the subject-matter seems to have been cruder, and female roles were played by women. Apart from that, the genre's diversity results in a certain difficulty in defining what it consists of. A dominant characteristic of the mime is its farcical and grotesque presentation of plausible everyday situations. Comedy, especially in the eyes of ancient critics, has a similar function, but is less farcical. As soon as dramatic genres like mime and comedy are used in another literary genre (such as the novel), the similarities of some plots and characters make the distinction between the two genres less immediately palpable.

The Latin novel had made use of mime before: Petronius' *Satyricon* has often been associated with mime, and the grotesque and low-life situations portrayed in its extant fragments give a good example of the literary use of mime in a novel.⁴⁹ The problem of attributing certain scenes in a novel to mimic or comic generic origin arises similarly for students of Petronius,⁵⁰ as Panayotakis (1995: p. xxv) states:

Old and, especially, New Comedy, at least in so far as it is represented by Plautus and Terence, should not be left out of the list of theatrical genres which might have worked as sources of inspiration for Petronius' imagination. [...] the author of the novel does not confine himself to mimic techniques as his sole source of laughter, but experiments also with conventions of Plautine farce or, broadly speaking, with methods common to all kinds of comedy, from Aristophanic slapstick and the humorous indecencies of Atellan farce to role-playing in New Comedy and the organisation of games in Roman amphitheatres.

⁴⁶ Cf. Robert (1930).

⁴⁷ Cf. *Insc.It.* IV. 1² no. 254, which collects all the evidence for the pantomime Apolaustus of the 2nd cent. and lists his victorious performances of Euripidean and Sophoclean 'tragedies' (referred to by Herz (1990: 179f.)). He is said to have performed parts of tragedies by Euripides. Cf. also the warnings by Robert (1930: 108); Seeck (1990: 234).

⁴⁸ Cf. Jory (2002) for the importance of pantomime in the 2nd cent. AD.

⁴⁹ Masterly analysis by Panayotakis (1995), with further literature. On Petronius and comic drama cf. also Horsfall (1989: 194, and 206 with n. 4).

⁵⁰ Preston (1915) lists many parallels between Petronius and Greek and Roman New Comedy. Some of his parallels can be found in mime, too, but overall, his list is a convincing amount of evidence for the use of comic material even in Petronius from comedy.

Similar things can be said of Apuleius, since he uses all kinds of comedy to achieve a funny effect, ranging from farcical mime to comedy elevated with tragic subtones. There is one main difference from Petronius, however, as Apuleius even uses tragic references as a foil to the lighter elements of his novel; they are, contrary to their presentation in Petronius, not always ridiculed. In *Cupid and Psyche*, for example, I will argue that tragedy is used in a comic-bathetic way,⁵¹ but in the description of Charite's death (*Met.* 8.1), the feeling of a tragic ending is on the whole neither ridiculed nor subverted.

The problem of distinguishing between different dramatic influences on the same text was debated in Apuleius' time, and the contemporary intellectual élite seems to have argued about the relationship between comedy and mime. Marcus Aurelius, who thanks to Fronto's exhortations had read and excerpted both genres widely, believed mime to be a development of New and Middle Comedy and appreciated it because of this (11.6):

μετὰ ταύτην ἡ μέση κωμωδία καὶ λοιπὸν ἡ νέα πρὸς τί ποτε παρείληπται, ἥ κατ' ὀλίγον ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκ μιμήσεως φιλοτεχνίαν ὑπερρῆν, ἐπίστησον.

(After this [i.e. after Old Comedy], consider for what purpose Middle Comedy and subsequently New Comedy were introduced onto the stage, which little by little degenerated into the artifice of Mime.)

Some authors are even credited with writing plays in both genres, for example Pliny the Younger's contemporary Vergilius Romanus (cf. *Epist.* 6.21 and 4.3). In the *Noctes Atticae* (2.23.11ff.), Gellius characterizes the comic playwright Caecilius as including certain mimic elements into his adaptation of the more 'serious' Menander.⁵² Thus a certain overlap and cross-fertilization between these two genres' stock types and scenes were acknowledged by Apuleius' contemporaries. In some instances, Apuleius seems to aim for a general comic tone in his narrative, and thus integrates elements from mime as well as comedy and tragedy.

Many ancient authors despise mime even when they favour comedy. Cicero, for example, shows contempt for mime (*Fam.* 12. 18), and does not quote it as frequently as tragedy and comedy, although he is aware of its political potential.⁵³ Apuleius, as will be shown in the course of this book, uses

⁵¹ Cf. Ch. 9.2 below.

⁵² Gellius 2.23.11: ea Caecilius, ne qua potuit quidem, conatus est enarrare, sed quasi minime probanda praetermisit et *alia nescio qua mimica* inculcavit. ('Caecilius has not attempted to reproduce [sc. some of Menander's lines], even where he might have done so; but he has passed them by as if they were of no value, and has dragged in some other farcical stuff'). Cf. Holford-Strevens (2003: 198 with n. 23) for statements in other authors describing Caecilius as mimic. On Bassus' claim (*CLE* 97) to have written comedies cf. below Ch. 3.5.

⁵³ Evidence in Reich (1903: 50ff.). On Cicero cf. Rawson (1993).

marked and unmarked quotations from the comic writers, but has no marked quotation from any extant mimographer, despite obviously being influenced by mime.⁵⁴ As far as comic genres are concerned, then, this book will concentrate on the analysis of comedy as an intertext, but parallels with mime will be used as well.

⁵⁴ Gellius, on the other hand, is one of our most important sources for the fragments of the mimographer Laberius.

Knowledge of Drama and Archaism in the Second Century

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Apuleius' interest in drama both old and newly composed is a contemporary interest shared by many authors of the Second Sophistic, but our knowledge of what kind of drama was available to his contemporaries is somewhat patchy. Green succinctly expresses the problem of the evidence for performance of drama during the second century:

The written evidence for performance of what we may call traditional theatre in Late Republican and Early Imperial Rome is extremely difficult and ambiguous. There is little firm evidence for the performance even of so central an author as Menander. One of the problems is that it is difficult to distinguish in the sources between knowledge of an author based in performance and one based on literary knowledge. Even when the evidence for knowledge through performance seems reasonably certain, it is difficult to distinguish between public performances and private, and then between performances of complete plays and recitations of famous passages or highlights.¹

Since we have so little evidence for the state of drama in the second century,² it is difficult to assess Apuleius' knowledge of it, and where he could have got his knowledge from, be it from watching plays performed or recited, or reading

¹ Green (1994: 145).

² Jocelyn (1988: 59 n. 18) (with further literature) is sceptical on performance.

Christian apologetic literature, due to its bias and repetitive invective is not straightforwardly reliable evidence (cf. Jürgens (1972); Jory (1986a); Green (1994: 169ff.)) For contradictory statements on performance of drama cf. Weismann (1972: 33–68), who argues that widescale performances did not take place, and Jürgens (1972: 65–146), who lists the evidence for Roman comedy (p. 88ff. Plautus, p. 107ff. Terence). It is interesting that Tertullian, an African contemporary of Apuleius, quotes many unknown comedies (p. 73ff.). Arnobius at least gives evidence for a performance of *Amphitruo*, and Donatus compares contemporary practices with earlier performances, cf. Arnob. 7.33. Don. *ad Ter. Andr.* 716.—Both statements have been doubted. Cf. Weismann (1972: 46 n. 84); Jakobi (1996: 10–14); Grant (1986: p. ix); Reeve in Reynolds (1983: 412), Horsfall (2003: 148 with n. 87) for divergent conclusions.

them.³ I shall discuss the availability to Apuleius of the texts of the *veteres poetae* ('old poets'), which include tragedies by Ennius and the comedies of Plautus and Terence.

Other sophists used drama in their works. There was certainly some knowledge of tragedy, either from the performance of excerpts or from pantomime. The favourite tragedian was Euripides, and Seeck (1990) makes a strong case for careful reading of tragedies by the sophists from visualization of costumes in their works etc. The general populace could watch tragic performances (either whole plays, or excerpts), whilst reading the plays was an option for the intellectual élite. Reading Euripides was part of rhetorical training, and Lucian frequently refers or alludes to the dramatic genres; it can be concluded from some of Lucian's strongly visual descriptions of actors that he had seen some performances.⁴ Last but not least, Apuleius himself mentions continued performances of tragedies as well as mimes,⁵ and a function of this chapter is to put his remarks into their proper context.⁶

New Comedy is also known to second-century authors. The comic stock character of the parasite, for example, is used by Plutarch in *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*. Lucian, and later Alciphron, create a renaissance of the parasite,⁷ and it is clear that they take their inspiration from Greek comedy, a genre with stock types already five hundred years old. Furthermore, stock characterization, of which the parasite is one example, was employed in oratorical training for young Romans, who were encouraged to recognize and learn different stock roles.⁸ The *parasitus* was also a mime figure,⁹ and it is

³ The continued writing of plays is of marginal interest here. For the assumption that writing of comedy stopped under the Empire cf. e.g. Nesselrath (1985: 111) for Greek comedy.—For the problem of Lucian *Dem. Enc.* 27 cf. Ghiron-Bistagne (1976: 300), against whom cf. Jones (1993: 41ff.). Jones (1993: 46) sees a link between 2nd-cent. archaism and the resurfacing of information about dramatic performances.

⁴ Cf. Kokolakis (1961) for the primarily tragic allusions in Lucian (with further literature) and Seeck (1990). Lucian mentions *inter alia* that people learned much of Euripides by heart, cf. *JTr.* 1. For evidence of Lucian having seen performances cf. e.g. *Salt.* 27, *Gall.* 26, *Pisc.* 31.—A comparable study of Lucian's use of comedy (although much less marked) seems to be still a desiderandum. For Lucian's transformation of comic subject matter into Platonic dialogue cf. Anderson (1976: 90–113). Two of Lucian's works, the *Tragodopodagra* and the *Okypous* seem to be comic mock-tragedies; for a brief discussion of the former: Bowie (1989: 254f.). For different uses of the term *τραγωδία* (mostly ironic) cf. Seeck (1990: 234f.), for aspects of tragedy in Plutarch cf. Tagliasacchi (1960). Further refs: Seeck (1990: 236).

⁵ Cf. Ch. 3.4 below.

⁶ Steinmetz (1982: 347) uses Apuleius' statements in the *Florida* as evidence for the continued performance of whole dramas in the theatre, but denies the continued writing of tragedies, comedies or Atellan farces. The latest attested names of comic authors, he argues, belong to the time of Trajan, to which he also dates Bassulus' inscription (*CLE* 97) (p. 348).

⁷ Nesselrath (1985: 120f.).

⁸ Cf. Quint. 11.3.73.

⁹ Cf. Panayotakis (1995: 4); Sen. *Nat.* 4a. *Praef.* 12.

impossible to reconstruct in which ways the portrayal of a mimic parasite would have been different from that of a comic parasite.

The use of comedy in literature, as exemplified by Apuleius, is commonly acknowledged. Only widespread reading and/or continued performance ensure that a wide field of readers recognizes the literary game these authors are playing. It is usually not possible to detect whether whole plays or only 'purple passages' were performed; but even the knowledge of excerpts alone, or indeed of libretti of pantomimes, based on tragedy and usually corresponding very closely in plot with the tragedies they are adapted from,¹⁰ entails knowledge of drama in Apuleius' target audience.

The knowledge of excerpts of comedies, too, studied or performed privately in symposia, sufficed for the spread of knowledge of comedy amongst the novelists and their audience. Another, little discussed, medium for the transmission of the knowledge of comedy may be the recital of comedies (as a whole or in excerpts) in the theatre, as mentioned in *Apul. Flor.* 16.

Rhetors of the Greek Second Sophistic also prove contemporary interest in drama in several forms, ranging from claims that they wrote comedy or tragedy themselves¹¹ to the integration of dramatic imagery into their novels; and the ancient novel itself, because of its lack of a generic name, is sometimes referred to as 'dramatic',¹² Philostratus, according to the somewhat garbled account of the *Suda*, wrote forty-three tragedies, fourteen comedies, and one treatise on tragedy in three books (Cf. K.-A. VII s.v. 'Philostratus II') Nothing of these works is known; but there is little reason to doubt the account of the *Suda*, since it otherwise faithfully records the works of the Philostratoi,

¹⁰ Cf. Lucian *Salt.* 31; Hall (2002: 28f.). No pantomime libretto is extant. On pantomimes as primarily responsible for the widespread knowledge of tragedy plots amongst the masses cf. Blänsdorf (1990: 11f.).

¹¹ Rohde (1914: 270 n. 2-1876: 251 n. 2 discusses the credibility of various Greek sophists to be poets of Old Comedy (e.g. Antonios Diogenes, cf. Photios *cod.* 166.111a34ff.).

¹² Photios calls e.g. Antonios Diogenes' novel 'dramatic', *δραματικόν*, (*cod.* 166. 109a7, cf. 111b30), cf. Rohde (1914: 376 with n. 1 = 1876: 350 n. 1). Dramatic elements may be found in the novels, and in the case of Antonios Diogenes it seems that the same author claims to have composed works of both genres, which may either refer to his novel itself, or to the composing of drama besides the novel. Rohde, not knowing of the evidence for continued performance and composition, does not believe that the 'tragedies' and 'comedies' attested for several sophistic authors, namely Philostratus, Synesius or Heliodorus of Athens, are dramas: Rohde (1914: 351 n. 1 = 1876: 326 n. 1), but prose narratives of some kind. He modifies his argument with Isagoras, *ὁ τῆς τραγωδίας ποιητής* ('the author of tragedy'), cf. Philostr. *VS* p. 95.1. On the other hand, given that epigraphical proofs for the continued writing of comedy can be found, it is not intrinsically unbelievable that Antonios Diogenes wrote comedies. Other references to 'tragedy' and 'comedy' in May (1998). For the title 'drama' cf. Marini (1991).

though it is arguably confused as to which of them wrote which works.¹³ A claim by a sophist (and thus by extension by Apuleius, who likewise claims to have written literary texts in all genres) to have written comedies or to know people who did so is not intrinsically incredible.

I shall look briefly in turn at evidence for Greece and Rome, as well as at the archaeological evidence in North Africa, for the continued performance of drama. Then I shall take a glance at reasons for Apuleius' knowledge of and preference for comedy in his literary works.

2.2. TRAGEDY AND COMEDY IN GREECE

Apuleius travelled widely in his youth.¹⁴ Places he mentions, besides Rome (*Flor.* 17.4) and North Africa, include Athens, Samos (*Flor.* 15.4), and Hierapolis in Phrygia (*Mund.* 327); he is also likely to have visited other centres of the Greek Sophistic in Asia Minor, such as Pergamum, Smyrna, or Ephesus. He also at least intended to visit Alexandria, another centre of learned activity (*Apol.* 55).¹⁵ Apuleius could have watched performances of Greek plays, including New Comedy, on his journeys.¹⁶ The comedian of choice was Menander.

Plutarch, in his *Moralia* (854b), asks why an educated man should go to the theatre unless he goes to see Menander,¹⁷ and also gives evidence for the recital of Menander during symposia, for example in *Moralia* 712b, where he says that one could more easily imagine a symposion without wine than without Menander. Other evidence for the performance and composition of comedies derives, inter alia, from Aelius Aristides, Marcus Aurelius, and Phrynichus.¹⁸ Precisely in the second century AD there is evidence for

¹³ Philostratus II *Ep.* 67 mentions tragedians, and in VS 2.11 a link between rhetoric and drama is e.g. provided by Isagoras, who studied under the rhetor Chrestos before composing tragedies.—On the different Philostratoi cf. Anderson (1986); De Lannoy (1997). For other sophists writing tragedies (Niketes and Skopelianos, of whose tragic production no traces remain) cf. Bowie (1989: 255).

¹⁴ Harrison (2000: 6).

¹⁵ Although no sophist in Philostratus' *Vitae Sophistarum* comes from Alexandria, four come from Naucratis.

¹⁶ Cf. Jones (1993: 45 with n. 29).

¹⁷ Plu. *Quaest. Conv.* 5 = 673b = Menander test. 105 K.–A. notes that during symposia actors of mimes and *ethologoi* appear as well as those who perform Menander. Similar statement in *De Vit. Pud.* 6 = 531b and 106 = *Quaest. Conv.* 7.5.4 = 706d = test. 106 K.–A. Cf. Jones (1991: 193), for the suggestion that even whole plays may have been performed during symposia. Cf. Hunter (2000) for the general preference of the time for Menander over Aristophanes.

¹⁸ Cf. Friedländer (1919–21: app. 14) for evidence for continued performance of comedy in the 2nd cent. (app. 15 gives the equivalent evidence for tragedy). Further evidence discussed in Jones (1993: 40f.).

re-performances of Menander, especially in Athens. The *Onomastikon* of Pollux is dedicated to Commodus and shows some interest in comedy, even though its information may be outdated.¹⁹

Epigraphical evidence from Greece, ranging from remote Kilikia²⁰ to the festival at Thespieae in Boeotia, points to continued performance as well as new compositions of both comedies and tragedies. Menander's comedies were probably still performed at Athens in Apuleius' time, and he may have seen them there.²¹

The vigour of the world-wide organization of actors shows that there was a high demand throughout the Roman Empire for actors of Greek tragedy and comedy. Archaeological evidence corroborates the contemporary predilection for Euripides and Menander, and pictures from the late second century AD often depict scenes from both playwrights in alternation on the same walls, putting Menander into the same rank as tragedy.²²

The evidence argues strongly for the widespread performance of Greek comedy in the second century. Menander was obviously one of the most often studied and performed authors, which turns his plays into a relatively easily recognizable intertext for the novels of the Second Sophistic, even in Apuleius' Africa.²³ Interest in these plays in the second century was marked, and when Apuleius used references to them, he could expect his educated readers (or as he calls them in *Met.* 9.30, the *lector scrupulosus*, 'diligent reader') to recognize his allusions. Their knowledge could be based on reading of the texts (see §§ 2.5 and 2.6 below), but in view of the evidence cited above it is clear that they also had opportunities to see them performed.

¹⁹ Green (1994: 154), but cf. the developments in the archaeological evidence gathered in Webster, Green, and Seeborg (1995), which might argue for continuous development of mask types.

²⁰ e.g. an inscription from the 2nd cent. AD from Kilikia, commemorating one Onesikles, who was a composer of, amongst other genres, (l. 2f.) 'ἐπῶν καὶ κωμῶν <ι> διὰς τῆς νέας | ἰαμβῶν' ('iambics in the manner of New Comedy'). Cf. Hicks (1890: 249 n. 23) = K.-A. vii. 96 = Mette (1977: vii 6). Cf. Mette (1977) and Jamot (1895) generally for the epigraphical evidence.

²¹ For possible entrance tokens from the mid-3rd cent. AD cf. Arnott (1979–2000: ii.51f.); Pickard-Cambridge (1968: 271f.) is doubtful about the attribution to this play. Other theatre tokens just represent masks (cf. Green (1994: 161) with notes for further literature). Cf. also Bieber (1961: 246).—In the Kerameikos a monument was set up for the famous 2nd-cent. comic actor Strato, who gave memorable performances of Menander (IG ii.12664 = Menander test. 59 K.-A.).

²² Cf. Jones (1993: 42); Green (1994: 164), both with further literature. The evidence includes wall paintings in a house in Ephesos, portraying scenes from tragedy and comedy (*Sikyonios*, *Orestes*, *Perikeiromene* and *Iphigeneia*). For Menander, *Achaioi*, a mythological comedy, cf. Bieber (1961: 243). Cf. also Green (1994: 164f.), with further literature, on the House of Menander in Mytilene or the sanctuary of Demeter at Pergamon. Aelian has a herm of Menander in his *villa suburbana*, indicating another sophist's interest in Menander, cf. Bowie (1989).

²³ Cf. Russell (1990b).

2.3. WATCHING PLAYS IN THE ROMAN WORLD

Rome did not have an equivalent to the Athenian *agones* or state festivals, and in their public festivals the Romans often combined performance of comic and tragic plays on the same day.²⁴ There is also evidence for privately employed actors of comedy, Atellan farces, mimes, and pantomimes in imperial Rome,²⁵ indicating a wide interest in the performance of plays.

For Roman audiences, tragic and comic plays, mime and pantomime may all traditionally have taken place at the same event, from funeral games to theatrical performances, but we have little evidence of the actual performance programmes.²⁶ Especially if only excerpts were performed, a theatre audience would have been able to see all kinds of dramatic performances within a very short time span, possibly even within the same day and at the same venue. Apuleius, as we shall see, corroborates this kind of performance in the *Florida*. For example, *Flor.* 18 demonstrates how Apuleius can in one breath mention tragedy, comedy, and mime, quoting from tragedy and comedy to the same effect, and in *Met.* 10 different types of spectacles, from choral performances to mimetic dances, are described as occurring in a theatre as part of a single performance. *Mutatis mutandis*, Apuleius offers a similar procedure in his literary works, too—he will be shown to integrate a range of dramatic vignettes, ranging from tragedy through comedy to mime and pantomime, into a single literary work, which displays elements of all of them. The *Metamorphoses* thus becomes a typically Roman dramatic novel, integrating seamlessly all dramatic genres available to Apuleius' readership into one single text.

²⁴ Bieber (1961: 227–30). She sees this as the reason for the mixing of mask reliefs in Pompeii, Ostia, and Rome, which often have tragic masks on one side and comic masks on the other, a custom which continued into the 2nd cent. Cf. ead. p. 250 for evidence for the performances of tragedy and comedy at least to the 3rd cent. cf. Jory (2002: 238–53), for portrayals of tragedy, comedy, mime, and pantomime together.

²⁵ Petron. 53; Plin. *Epist.* 7.24.1; Apul. *Apol.* 13.20; Gaius *Inst.* 3.212, *Dig.* 38.125.1: 38.1.27 pr., 38.1.37 pr. Cf. Jory (1970: 244).—Evidence for the performance of whole plays: Under Nero, Afranius' *Incendium*, a *togata*, was performed (Suet. *Nero* 11.2), and tragic and comic performances of unspecified plays are mentioned (Leppin (1992: 25f. with n. 8): Apul. *Flor.* 18.4; Tert. *Spect.* 17.7; *Nat.* 1.16.12f.; Novat. *Spect.* 7; Aug. *Civ.* 2.8; Claud. 17.314f.); On imperial tragedy performances cf. Hall (2002: 26ff.). Christian authors: Jürgens (1972: 228ff.); Weismann (1972: 46)). Inscriptions from Pompeii perhaps hint at reading or performances of *Heautontimoroumenos* (*CIL* 4.1211f., 1616, 1637, 1870, 4555, 5417, 8564, 8581 mention the name *Menedemer-umenus*, perhaps a calque of Menedemus and *Heautontimoroumenos*—Jocelyn (1988: 60 n. 29) is sceptical.). Finally, Arnobius (3rd cent.) seems to mention performances of Plautus' *Amphitruo* (*Nat.* 7.33). For evidence for the performance of *Atellanae* in Apuleius' time: Steinmetz (1982: 347) (cf. above n. 6).

²⁶ On the problem of reconstructing a performance programme for lack of evidence cf. Horsfall (2003: 57).

Hadrian, as part of his preference for the archaic (*SHA* 16.6), has plays performed in line with his general archaizing taste, both publicly (*SHA Hadrian* 19.6) and privately (26.4).²⁷ Blänsdorf points out that substantial theatrical building projects occur in the time when no new drama was being written on a large scale, and this development, together with the reworking of Greek theatre buildings to adapt them to Roman needs, culminates in the second century AD.²⁸ The number of days dedicated to scenic entertainments increased steadily. In the mid-fourth century, for example, 102 of 176 festival days were dedicated to *ludi scaenici*,²⁹ but our evidence for the exact nature of the performance of Roman *ludi scaenici* in this century is remarkably scarce.³⁰

It seems, then, that in addition to watching mimes and pantomimes performed as mass entertainment, members of the literary élite at the time of the Second Sophistic not only watched plays performed, publicly or privately, they also prided themselves on their knowledge of comedy, or even showed their literary expertise in composing some themselves. New Comedy, be it Menandrian or Plautine, was given a boost by the élite of Apuleius' time.

2.4. THEATRICAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN NORTH AFRICA

Even Apuleius' North African audience would have been able not only to read but also to watch plays performed. This issue is important for the reception of his African works, the *Florida* and the *Apologia*, which, as will be shown, make wide use of dramatic imagery and quotations. The second century saw a huge increase in the building of theatres in Africa. Sabratha, Leptis Magna, and Madauros all had theatres.³¹ Africa Proconsularis was extremely wealthy, and this is partly reflected by the astonishing density of theatrical buildings in this province³² and the abundance of performances of *ludi scaenici* in these

²⁷ Cf. Benario (1980: ad locc.).

²⁸ The increasing interest in theatres as sumptuous building projects has something to do with the importance of theatrical buildings as civic space and for the Emperor Cult. Cf. Blänsdorf (1990a: 12–14); Zucchelli (1995).

²⁹ This statistic is taken from Blänsdorf (1990a: 12). Cf. Jory (1986a: 144): 'The heyday of the Roman theatre was not in the Republic but in the Empire.' Statistics on theatres *per capita* in the Roman the Empire: Steinmetz (1982: 344–8).

³⁰ Jory (1986a: 144); André (1975); Blänsdorf (1990a: 9).

³¹ Cf. Caputo (1959) for Sabratha, and generally Lachaux (c.1979) for theatres in North Africa, esp. 9–12 for their typology. On the culmination of theatre building programmes in the 2nd cent. AD cf. Blänsdorf (1990a: 14).

³² Lachaux (c.1979: 15) lists twenty-five theatres and twenty-one amphitheatres, but without dates of construction (for which cf. s.vv.). Cf. *ibid.* for some statistics and some possible reasons for the unusual density of theatrical buildings in this province, and p. 20f. for a table of inscriptions.

theatres,³³ an indication of the voracious appetite of Apuleius' contemporaries for spectacular entertainment.

The material richness of the theatrical evidence from North Africa culminates in the period after AD 180.³⁴ One interesting find is a second-century relief with a mask and the inscription EVNVCV from the theatre of Khamissa. The mask has a 'smooth face, a mass of tight curls under pointed cap, long corkscrew side-locks'.³⁵ Given that the inscription is in Latin and that we know that Terence, whose most popular comedy was the *Eunuchus*, was still performed in the time of Quintilian (cf. 11.3.182), this may be good evidence for the popularity of Roman comedy in this period in North Africa.³⁶ The mask has a closed mouth, and Gsell and Joly are consequently sceptical about its attribution to comedy and prefer pantomime,³⁷ but there are a few examples of masks with closed mouths which certainly represent comedy masks.³⁸ The case is perhaps *sub iudice*, but this find can possibly be taken as supportive evidence for the performance of Latin plays (possibly comedy) in Africa Proconsularis at the time of Apuleius. In this case, it may give us some indication that the second century's predilection for the *veteres poetae* extended as far as Apuleius' province.

The theatres built so extensively in North Africa must have accommodated drama. Performances certainly must have included, as Apuleius tells us in the *Florida*,³⁹ mimes, pantomimes, acrobats (for example, the infamous rope dancers), *venationes* ('hunting spectacles') etc., but also tragedy and comedy. The term used in inscriptions is *ludi scaenici*, a wide and problematic term. It can describe the performance of tragedy, comedy, *Atellana* (native Italian farce), and mime.⁴⁰

A unique and specifically interesting African theatre is that of Sabratha.⁴¹ Its *pulpitum* ('stage platform') with its beautifully conserved frieze provides some evidence of dramatic performances. This *pulpitum* is unique in its

³³ Evidence for the frequency of theatrical performances and drama in Apuleius' Africa: Lachaux (c.1979: 20f. (table 4: 'Occasion des jeux du théâtre')); the evidence for the 2nd cent. AD is compiled in May (2002: app. 14.2).

³⁴ Evidence in Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: ii.484–91), and for Apuleius' time, where evidence is much scarcer, *ibid.*, 404.

³⁵ Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: ii.491) (6FS4). First published in Gsell and Joly (1914–22: 111). Cf. Jory (1986a: n. 2).

³⁶ For tragedy cf. Parca (1991).

³⁷ Jory (2002: 241), talking about evidence from Aphrodisias, says that in the 2nd cent. AD pantomime masks usually have closed mouths.

³⁸ Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: i.3). Bonaria (1955–6: i.128) considers it to be a mime mask.

³⁹ Cf. Ch. 3.4 below.

⁴⁰ Cf. Bernstein (1998: 318) on Sulla's *ludi scaenici*. Leppin (1992: 26).

⁴¹ Formal archaeological publication: Caputo (1959); cf. Lachaux (c.1979: 96); colour pictures and description by Di Vita in Di Vita et al. (1999: 146ff.).

decoration,⁴² since it does not portray the long narrative sequences of mythological stories about Herakles and Dionysos usually depicted on *pulpita*,⁴³ but instead single independent scenes. Each scene shows one single event performed or performable in this theatre, as is also indicated by the centrepiece dedicated to emperor worship, which commonly took place within theatres.⁴⁴ This unique pictorial programme alone may show some independence of the local artists from the common imagery used for theatrical buildings of the time. Although this theatre is slightly later than Apuleius' trial (AD 158–9) in the Sabrathan Basilica (the theatre was begun under Commodus)⁴⁵, and the *pulpitum* decoration seems to derive from the early Severan period, an analysis of the figures on its *pulpitum* may indicate the performance of mime, comedy, and tragedy at least at this time and also make the availability of these dramatic genres to a wide audience in Africa in Apuleius' day very likely. Again, the different genres may have been performed in the same *ludus*.⁴⁶

The third *exedra* (or bay) shows a male figure in a toga turning towards a second man in a short tunic and cloak; a woman sits next to them. The figures are not wearing masks, and the action is very lively: both features suggest mime, although attempts to associate the scene with any known mime have so far proved unsuccessful.⁴⁷

The fifth *exedra* shows a dialogue between two tragic actors, one of whom acts Herakles. Caputo identifies the scene tentatively as Sophocles' *Trachiniae*. The seventh *exedra* in front of the east staircase shows a tragi-comic scene, which Caputo identifies as the duel of Eteokles and Polyneikes in the presence of Iokasta,⁴⁸ but again this attribution is very tentative. The characters clearly wear masks.

Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995) in discussing the seventh *exedra*⁴⁹ propose a different interpretation. The relief recalls scenes on *phlyax* vases, and they tentatively suggest that Middle Comedy might be intended.⁵⁰ The costumes and

⁴² Stupperich (2000: 215f.)—he also argues that the so-called 'philosophers' meeting' in the first *exedra* is very likely a gathering of actors. Similarly Caputo (1959: 16).

⁴³ Cf. Stupperich (2000: 215) on Sabratha and its fundamental differences (cf. also p. 229).

⁴⁴ Cf. n. 28 above.

⁴⁵ For various attempts to date it cf. Mattingly (1995: 127) (late 2nd cent.); Caputo (1959: 29f.) (already some Severan influence); J. B. Ward-Perkins (1976) in Stillwell, MacDonald, and McAllister (1976: 779) (late Antonine period).

⁴⁶ Cf. Bieber (1961: 237).

⁴⁷ Cf. Caputo (1959: 18f.) for some attempts.

⁴⁸ Caputo (1959: 22, and plate 49, fig. 83).

⁴⁹ Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: ii.490f.), cf. *phlyax* vase London F 269 = Trendall and Webster (1971: iv.21).

⁵⁰ Caputo (1959: 22f.) suggests a *hilarotragoedia* such as Rhinthon's plays as the source, but since he wrote it has been shown that the *phlyax* vases rather represent comedy than *hilarotragoedia*. Cf. Ch. 9.5 below.

beardless fighters, they argue, are most unusual for New Comedy (as well as for tragedy, which is portrayed in the fifth bay through actors wearing high *coturni* and *onkos*-masks). The fact that no other scene portrayed can be interpreted as comedy except this one very much indicates that Middle Comedy or mythological travesty (if this interpretation is correct) is the Sabrathan idea of comedy, and in Apuleius' novel mythological travesty will also be shown to be an important feature. It is noteworthy that in *Met.* 10.14, in a decidedly comic context, Apuleius refers to Eteoklean fights amongst two brothers,⁵¹ and Petronius, too, alludes to the *Thebanum par* (*Sat.* 80.3, cf. Ch. 6.3 below) in recounting the mock fight between Ascyllus and Encolpius over Giton.

The sixth *exedra* shows another possible parallel with Apuleius, the myth of the judgement of Paris,⁵² set on a rock or in a cave, just like the one that Apuleius describes for his pantomime in *Met.* 10.29–34. It is too speculative to assume an influence one way or the other here, but the correspondences are striking. One of the *pulpitum* reliefs shows a dance of the Graces and Hours, which may be interpreted as similar to the one portrayed in *Met.* 10.32, the introduction to the fatal charade.⁵³

Two groups of masks flanking the tragic scene on the fifth *exedra*⁵⁴ represent several rather untypical comic and perhaps some tragic mask types. In the portrayal of the comedy relief and masks, then, the artists from Sabratha show some independence from the styles common in other theatrically inspired decoration, for example in the Menander mosaics, which are rather stereotypical in their portrayal of the characters and scenes. These provincial idiosyncrasies may be indicative of diverse theatrical performances, ranging over the major dramatic genres, with a unique provincial-style depiction of the actual stage action. Thus some of the best evidence for the continued performance of comedy and tragedy interestingly derives from the second-century Africa of Apuleius.

2.5. EDUCATION THROUGH STUDYING DRAMA: THE SOPHIST'S CASE

Tragedies and comedies were well known in educated circles, and short quotations were immediately recognized; learning comedy and tragedy by

⁵¹ Cf. May (1998).

⁵² Caputo (1959: figs. 79–82).

⁵³ Theatres other than Sabratha feature similar reliefs with dancers, such as the theatre in Arles: Caputo (1959: 15). Another piece portrays the nine Muses, with Thalia holding a comic mask. Statues of Thalia and Melpomene are found in Dugga, perhaps also representing tragic and comic performances, cf. Caputo (1959: 18).

⁵⁴ Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: ii.491 = 6FS2).

heart, and watching comedians act,⁵⁵ formed an essential part of Roman education up until the fifth century AD.⁵⁶ Quintilian's negative judgement on Roman comedy (10.1.99f.) contrasts with his exuberant praise of Menander (10.1.69–72),⁵⁷ the reading of whom alone would turn students into orators, and illustrates perhaps the main reason for the Second Sophistic's interest in drama: comic writers and actors, in addition to the performing of comedies, were used in education even before the archaizing movement,⁵⁸ and for rhetorical training in order to help the orator work on his eloquence and performance.⁵⁹ Apuleius, if his education followed the maxims set out by Quintilian for the education of Roman rhetoricians—and he states that he has been through the usual Roman education system in addition to some education in literature in Athens⁶⁰—will thus have studied Menander as part of his rhetorical training.

Though Cicero compares the art of the orator primarily with that of the tragic actor, by the time of Quintilian it is the function primarily of a *comoedus* to teach oratorical delivery to young Romans, concentrating on subjects such as correct pronunciation or avoidance of exaggerated mannerisms,⁶¹ a function that actors of mimes or pantomimes could not fulfil.

Orators primarily looked to comedy for both oratorical skill and *ethopoiia* ('delineation of character').⁶² Quintilian (10.1.69ff. = Menander test. K.–A. 101) recommends Menander, because he shows himself to be a good orator, especially in his trial scenes and soliloquies (*meditationes*). Characterization in oratory often involved imitation or appropriation of comic stock characters.⁶³ Quintilian goes on to provide evidence of *ethopoiia* by imitating comic stock characters (Quint. 10.1.71f.), showing the special importance of stock

⁵⁵ Quint. 11.3.91 = test. 60 K.–A. Evidence collected in: Beacham (1991: 237 n. 28). Cf. also Cousin (1975). For costuming in the 1st cent. AD cf. Bieber (1961: 231). Fantham (1982) and (1984) considers dramatic performances of Menander in Rome during the early Empire as rare.

⁵⁶ Cf. Blänsdorf (1990a: 11f.); Aug. *Civ.* 2.8.

⁵⁷ Cf. Deufert (2002: 194f.)—Quint. 6.2.35 stresses actors' emotionality: he saw comedians leave the theatre crying after emotional scenes. Quint. 1.8.8–12, cf. also Tac. *Dial.* Cf. Steinmetz (1982: 25). Quintilian may represent the norm of his age; cf. Fuhrmann s.v. 'Quintilianus' in *Der Kleine Pauly*, iv, col. 1309.

⁵⁸ Bonner (1977: 215f., 224f.) Fantham (1982: esp. 259); cf. Stat. *Silv.* 2.1.115f.; Auson. *Ep.* 22.46f.; Ov. *Trist.* 2.369f.

⁵⁹ Cf. Quint. 1.8.7 = Menander test. 100 K.–A. Cf. Fantham (2002) for the reciprocal influence of oratory and acting on each other in terms of performance.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Flor.* 20.2 for Apuleius' education through the stages of *litterator*, *grammaticus* and *rhetor*, and in literature in Athens.

⁶¹ Cf. Quint. 1.1, and Fantham (2002: 370).

⁶² Theon *Prog.* 2 praises the *prosopopoiia* of Menander together with that of Homer, Plato, and other Socratic interlocutors (108 K.–A.).

⁶³ Cf. Quint. 11.3.73f.; evidence collected in Fantham (2002: 372).

characters for rhetorical training and the interface between declamation and comedy. The similarities between actors and orators were often exploited in rhetoric.⁶⁴ This use of comedy for educational purposes, which is attested as late as Augustine,⁶⁵ is also (but to a lesser extent) extended to the Latin comedians: during the first century AD, Terence was the commonest school author, and there is some evidence for continued contemporary interest in Plautus, perhaps even for his use in school.⁶⁶ Caecilius and Afranius were occasionally studied, too.⁶⁷ More certain is the continued use of tragic plays as school texts during this period (see, for instance, Persius 1.76–82).

Plautus became more prominent in the century following Quintilian.⁶⁸ For Apuleius the orator, it is thus natural to turn to comedies specifically as subtexts for his works, not only, if Quintilian is to be believed, because he will have studied them in the course of his rhetorical training, but also because of the renewed interest of the contemporary élite in this literary genre. For Apuleius the rhetorician, using stock characterization is something he learned very early, and much of his comic subtext in the *Metamorphoses* is based on this kind of comic *ethopoia*.

2.6. SECOND-CENTURY ARCHAISM AND APULEIUS

Besides rhetoricians and educators, another group of scholars started to develop an interest in comedy. In the second century AD, grammarians regained interest in preserving the Latin language and its oldest specimens. C. Sulpicius Apollinaris from Carthage, the teacher of Aulus Gellius, wrote *periochae* (metrical plot summaries) for the comedies of Terence and possibly of Plautus,⁶⁹ which could conceivably have been known to Apuleius. Plautus' *Poenulus* possibly received a commentary, or at least featured in the

⁶⁴ Parallels between actors and orators: Kokolakis (1961); Fantham (2002). Cicero himself uses the comparison between actors and orators continually, and famously trained with the actor Q. Roscius, whom he also defended. (Especially *De Orat.* 3.213–17 for the use an orator can make of an actor's *actio*.).

⁶⁵ Cf. *Civ.* 2.8.

⁶⁶ Cf. Deufert (2002: 177ff.). Quotations of Plautus in other authors are scarce, but continuity is still proven through the interest of the grammarians of this period (p. 181ff.).

⁶⁷ Cf. Quint. 10.1.99. For a list cf. Sedigitus in Gell. 15.25.

⁶⁸ Green (1994: 145); Bonner (1977: 215ff. and 224).

⁶⁹ Cf. Brown s.v. *argumentum* in *OCD*—Aemilius Asper, who wrote important commentaries on Terence and others, may have flourished in the late 2nd cent. AD and thus cannot have been used by Apuleius, cf. von Albrecht (1994: 1025 with n. 1, and 1165), Steinmetz (1982: 186). Cf. also the commentaries on Terence's *Adelphoe* and *Eunuchus* by Helenius Acro, and see Schanz and Hosius (1927: 119).

grammatical enquiry by Terentius Scaurus.⁷⁰ This era had a heightened interest in comedy not only for linguistic purposes, as a source of archaic words, but also as part of the educational system and as a literary genre and art form in itself.

Especially on the Latin side, the second century saw a revival of the works of Plautus, Ennius, and Cato, along with the appreciation of their literary qualities; their language became studied for 'le mot juste'. Stress is generally laid on the *poetae veteres*; the classics (for example, Horace and Vergil) are mentioned, but not as highly appreciated as the older generation of poets, and admiring references to tragedy are almost all to the *veteres poetae*, Ennius, Accius, and Pacuvius.⁷¹ The Frontonians, however, generally polemicized against Seneca.⁷² Apuleius, who freely draws on Seneca in his philosophical works, is a notable exception, an attitude, which, as we will see, also extended to Seneca's tragedies in the *Metamorphoses*.

This is not the place to discuss second-century archaism as a whole; instead I will focus on the role of the language of archaic dramatists as well as the use of quotations in this period. Plautus is especially congenial to archaizers and linguists at that time, given that his is one of the oldest literary Latin texts that survived, and in the case of Apuleius the intertextuality between comedy and novel, enhanced by comic words, is a desired effect. To establish Apuleius' literary context, it is necessary briefly to discuss Fronto's and Gellius' attitude to archaism, tragedy, and comedy. The three archaists, however, follow different agendas in using archaic language, and thus they should be treated separately.

The second century saw a revived interest in Plautus especially. When exactly in the second century the reduction of Plautus' many plays to the canonical twenty-one *Fabulae Varronianae* took place is a matter of conjecture,⁷³ and it is quite probable that the widely travelled Apuleius knew other

⁷⁰ Schanz and Hosius (1927: 83). Terentius Scaurus is Hadrianic and mentioned by Gellius (e.g. NA 11.15). Deufert (2002: 210 with n. 63), however, doubts it was a commentary. Cf. id. p. 209 for evidence for other commentaries of the period on comedy, including e.g. Arruntius Celsus' commentary or glosses on *Phormio*; similar commentaries may have been written at this time for Plautus.

⁷¹ On these and other authors of the second century: Steinmetz (1982: 121–373). Apuleius and Seneca: e.g. in the protreptic part of his *De Deo Socratis*, cf. Harrison (2001a: 214ff.) in Harrison, Hilton and Hunink (2001).

⁷² Seneca: Marache (1952: 214ff.). On archaism cf. Deufert (2002: 200); Holford-Strevens (2003: 354–63) (who calls it 'mannerism').

⁷³ I am not convinced by Leo's (1912a: 21ff.) arguments for the Hadrianic period. The term *Varroniana fabula* is slightly misleading, as Gratwick (1993: 5f.) points out; it should rather be applied to the nineteen or so additional plays that Varro wanted to include in the list of genuine plays on stylistic grounds. Still, the term *fabulae Varronianae* is so commonly used for the twenty-one plays that it will also be employed here to denote the twenty-one extant plays, since Varro characterized them as the ones which are by general agreement genuinely Plautine.

now lost comedies, whether excerpts or whole plays,⁷⁴ either from reading them or seeing them produced on stage. Excerpts would very likely be from the beginnings of the comedies. Many quotations (marked and unmarked) in Apuleius are from the beginnings of plays (for example Plaut. *Truc.* 1ff. in *Flor.* 18.7f.; or Plaut. *Mil.* 4 in *Socr.* 145) and for example in *Met.* 10.23ff., as will be argued, a prologue giving background information may have been excerpted and used.

In the *Apologia* Apuleius is able to quote from comedies by other authors no longer known to us. He thus may have known and used more than the twenty-one *fabulae* of Plautus extant today. In the case of the twenty-one, Leo is inclined to believe that in the Antonine age the text of Plautus was already in the state in which it was transmitted to us, including corruptions and emendations.⁷⁵ Close comparisons of Plautus' and Apuleius' texts are thus possible.

It is obvious from Gellius' quotations that he also knew other Roman playwrights; at least his reading of Caecilius' *Plocium* is certain.⁷⁶ Other evidence for the knowledge of Plautine plays other than the twenty-one is Iulius Romanus, who seems to have excerpted from two plays attributed to Plautus, *Friularia* (perhaps from a grammarian, admittedly) and *Caecus* (perhaps directly), and who certainly lived after Apuleius.⁷⁷ Marcus Aurelius could also quote from *Colax*, assuming it to be a known Plautine play,⁷⁸ and not marking it as unusual, although it is non-Varronian. To me this seems to indicate that at least for Marcus Aurelius quoting non-Varronian Plautus is unremarkable. This might be the result of his promise to his teacher Fronto to dedicate all his time to the reading of Plautus (p. 68.10f.): 'meque ad istum histrionum poetam totum convertam lecteis prius orationculeis Tullianeis' ('after reading some of Tully's minor speeches I will devote myself entirely to your stage poet').

Apuleius very probably knew Gellius from his time in Athens, where they may have shared a teacher.⁷⁹ The two Latin archaizers, too, shared a common

⁷⁴ On excerpts as a sophistic way of preserving and condensing information cf. Harrison (2000: 24) (on epitomizing) and Sandy (1997: 73–91) on the importance of compendia in the 2nd cent. AD.

⁷⁵ Cf. Leo (1912a: 18). Deufert (2002: 293ff.) shows that the archetype of the twenty-one *fabulae* is later.

⁷⁶ Caecilius seems to have been very Plautine in outlook and style. Cf. Leo (1912a: 20) for a selection of quotations from now lost tragedies and comedies found in writers of the archaizing period.

⁷⁷ He quotes Apuleius. Cf. Deufert (2002: 240ff.) who discusses his date and his knowledge of non-Varronian comedies.

⁷⁸ Fronto *Ep.* 5 = pp. 27.24–28.3 = *Colax* fr. 11 Lindsay (1904–5).

⁷⁹ Holford-Strevens (2003: 22–6).

interest in ancient drama, especially comedy, which they may have known from their studies or from watching it.

Fronto

Fronto is the influential forerunner of the archaizing movement;⁸⁰ although tendencies towards it existed already before Fronto's time,⁸¹ he linked the contemporary interest in archaic literature with modern ideas of rhetoric, as found in the 'modern' Asianists of the preceding century.⁸² 'While Fronto did not create this antiquarian movement, it was he who reduced it to a system and [...] it was the Frontonian school which first made it creative and productive';⁸³ he developed and systematized the new archaizing movement, with its interest in the *poetae veteres*, the early Latin poets.

Plautus becomes one of Fronto's favourites, but he also likes other comic authors, as well as *fabulae togatae* (comedies with Roman content) and *Atellanae*. His preference for the *veteres* is entirely based on their provision of archaic diction. As for Latin tragedy, Fronto ignores Livius completely, but, like Gellius and Marcus Aurelius, he admires Ennius,⁸⁴ the 'Roman Homer' and dramatist, but again Fronto was more interested in the words Ennius used and in their antiquity than in the art of the poet. Seneca was neglected. Most of Fronto's archaizing words are drawn from Plautus, and his interest in Plautus by far transcends that in any other dramatic author amongst the *veteres*.⁸⁵ His Plautine quotations are mainly from the Varronian *fabulae*.

⁸⁰ e.g. Champlin (1980: 58). Cf. Champlin (1980: 29–44) for a reconstruction of the literary society in Rome in Fronto's time.

⁸¹ e.g. Brock (1911: 25–35); Marache (1952: 15–78). The clash between old and new rhetoricians and their diverse models is already revealed (for example) in Tacitus' *Dialogus* 23.2; cf. Mayer (2001: 144ff. and 163).

⁸² Marache (1952: 67ff.).

⁸³ Brock (1911: 32).

⁸⁴ Fronto p. 56.20ff. 'poetarum Plautus multoque maxime Ennius' ('of poets Plautus especially, and most especially Q. Ennius'); cf. Marache (1952: 155).

⁸⁵ Cf. Marache (1957: *passim*); Marache (1952: 157). Although Naevius receives only one mention (Marcus has two quotations, cf. Holford-Strevens (2003: 214). Naevius is Fronto's third and Accius the fourth in rank for preferred vocabulary, although Fronto does call him *inaequalis Accius* ('Accius unequal') in 134.1. Pacuvius, whom Fronto calls *mediocris*, is even less favoured. At 12.9.6, Gellius, however, lets his Fronto quote from Pacuvius (244–6 Ribbeck) not only to illustrate linguistic usage but also because the verses are 'delightful', cf. Holford-Strevens (2003: 220). Caecilius is of less interest to him, and although Fronto likes Laberius (he calls him *noster Laberius*, 'our Laberius', p. 15.6f.) and quotes from him several times, it is Laberius' use of unusual words that he points out, and he likes mimes as well as Atellan farces for their witty and choice words: letter 106. 24–6, cf. also p. 49.19. Fronto also ignores Afranius completely, Cf. Marache (1952: 267). Afranius is only marginally studied in Gellius' *Noctes Atticae*.

Terence is never mentioned by name, and Terentian language may only occasionally have been used.⁸⁶

The letters of Fronto do not become discussions in essay form.⁸⁷ Still, his approach to literature and archaism can be gleaned from them, since he discusses rhetorical issues with his correspondents. Fronto is employed as a teacher of rhetoric for the young Caesars. His goal of teaching them the right elocution explains the sometimes obsessive search for the right word.⁸⁸ He is not interested in the archaization of language, nor in the discussion of the literary merits of his lexical sources,⁸⁹ nor in rhetorical invention. He even criticizes Marcus Aurelius for relinquishing rhetoric for the sake of the 'less demanding' (as he thinks) study of philosophy (p. 149).

His instructions are often lists of names of the *veteres poetae* with brief characterizations of the author's style, compare p. 56.20ff., or p. 227.11f.: 'ut te Plauto expolires aut Accio expleres aut Lucretio delenires' ('you would polish your style with Plautus or fill yourself with Accius or soothe yourself with Lucretius' [adapted]), in which Plautus is the first author named, and which is followed by a discussion of unusual Plautine words,⁹⁰ which surpasses by far Fronto's interest in other poets (Caecilius, Naevius, Accius, Pacuvius etc.); *fabulae togatae* and *Atellanae* are more to his taste for their verbal experimentations.

In his correspondence, Fronto appreciates Plautus' vocabulary, assonances, and word games, and it is from him that he takes most of his unusual words.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Terence's name occurs only in a conjecture p. 133 (in the Letter to M. Antoninus *de eloquentia*), where the text reads 'sublimis Lucretius, mediocris Pacuvius', and Warren, cited in van den Hout (1988), would like to read, 'sublimis Lucretius, <Terentius> mediocris, Pacuvius <uber>' ('Lucretius is sublime, Terence mediocre, Pacuvius verbose'); an unnecessary intrusion into the text, possibly inspired by a similar wording in Gell. 6.14. Only two passages in the whole of Fronto may be inspired by Terence: p. 115 (to Verus Augustus, 1.12) 'cuius spes opesque omnes in vobis sunt solis sitae' ('whose hopes and fortunes all on you alone are centred?') may recall Ter. *Ad.* 331, *Phorm.* 470 (and Sall. *Iug.* 114.4, which is perhaps more likely to be Fronto's immediate source; for Fronto's admiration of Sallust cf. n. 90 below). p. 175 (*ad amicos* 1.5 to Claudius Julianus) 'fac periculum in militiae muneribus, fac periculum in consiliis iudicialis, fac periculum in litteris' ('Try him in military duties, try him in legal consultations, try him in letters') may recall Ter. *Eun.* 476f. Cf. also Mattiacci (1986: 191) for the archaists' lack of interest in Terence.

⁸⁷ Steinmetz (1982: 181).

⁸⁸ Cf. pp. 57f., 135f., 150, 227f., where he discusses Plautine words.

⁸⁹ Steinmetz (1982), 174. Fronto's stress on rhetoric: Marache (1952: 128–37); the right word: *ibid.* 39–151. Latin purity: Sandy (1997: 21).

⁹⁰ Cf. the authorities for word formation p. 160: 'Accius, Plautus, Sallustius saepenumero, etiam raro Tullius' ('Accius, Plautus, Sallust very often, even occasionally Cicero ...'). On Fronto's recommendation of *veteres* to Hadrian cf. Deufert (2002: 200f.).

⁹¹ Examples: *elavere* ('to wash thoroughly', 58.10f.), or *exradicitus* ('utterly and completely', p. 153.14). Cf. Deufert (2002: 203ff.) for a critical discussion: it is primarily Plautine words and the occasional expression which find their way into Fronto's style. This is a symptom of his private correspondence, as Deufert points out (p. 204): the published speeches show no Plautine imitation.

The ease with which he adapts Plautine words to his own style can be demonstrated by Fronto p. 77.3f., 'M. Lucilius tribunus pl(ebis) hominem liberum, civem Romanum, cum collegae mitti iuberent, adversus eorum sententiam ipsius vi *in carcerem compegit*.' ('M. Lucilius, a tribune of the people, against the decision of his colleagues and with his own hand *cast into prison* by force a Roman citizen, though they ordered his discharge.') The sentence recalls several passages from Plautus, for example *Amph.* 155: 'in carcerem compegerint' ('they cast [sc. me] into prison').⁹²

The closely-knit literary circle, to which, for example, Gellius (NA 19.8) but also Claudius Maximus, in front of whom Apuleius had to deliver his *Apologia*, belonged, was highly influenced by Fronto's ideas on style and archaism.⁹³ Fronto however concentrated less on the actual content of what the author wants to express with the unusual or archaic word.⁹⁴ This relatively restricted interest in only searching for the rare word,⁹⁵ the *insperata atque inopinata verba* ('words unhoped for and unexpected'),⁹⁶ is where he differs from Apuleius. This may also be the reason for Fronto's primary concentration, when he cites from Plautus, on the twenty-one Varronian *fabulae*, the 'genuineness' of which guarantees the words to be truly Plautine and thus genuinely archaic.

Only in a few instances does he hint at the content of the passages, for example p. 175f.:

prorsus ut nullus miles Plautinus de suis quam hic de tuis virtutibus gloriosius praedicaret, nisi quod Plautus de suo milite cum lepore, hic de te cum amore et cum summa fide.

(In very truth no soldier of Plautus so vaingloriously eulogized his own merits more than he [i.e. Maximus] did yours, only that Plautus in the case of his soldier spoke with pleasantry, while of you Maximus spoke with affection and the utmost loyalty.)⁹⁷

Fronto here compares the bragging of a Plautine *miles gloriosus* with Maximus' praise of Avidius Cassius. Plautus' soldiers, however, are not really using 'pleasantry' alone, but sheer incredible self-praise which turns them into

⁹² Cf. also *Men.* 942 'in carcerem ted esse compactum scio' ('I know that you have been cast into prison'), *Poen.* 1409 'compingere in carcerem' ('to cast into prison'), and *Rud.* 715 'te in carcerem compingi' ('To have you cast into prison').

⁹³ Champlin (1980: 48–52).

⁹⁴ Cf. Marache (1952: 128–51).

⁹⁵ Brock (1911: 97–124); Marache (1952: 138f.).

⁹⁶ Cf. p. 150.10. Brock (1911: 101ff.).

⁹⁷ The idea of a 'miles gloriosus' is also used by Fronto p. 132.8 'aut num ego tibi videor gloriosum militem erudisse?' ('or do you think I taught a braggart soldier?'; trans. RM)

ridiculous and often less sympathetic characters.⁹⁸ Maximus' genuine praises are, Fronto argues, heartfelt, and not intended to turn the target of his rhetoric into a laughing stock, and thus, despite being even more exuberant than the Plautine soldiers' self-praise, well deserved. He ignores that it is not actually Plautus who is praising the soldier, but his comic creation, the soldier, who is indulging in self-praise. When praise, negatively charged and undeserved in Plautus, becomes genuine and positive in Fronto, the Plautine context, although known to Fronto, becomes manipulated and subordinate to Fronto's own point.

In Fronto's correspondence there are only two passages from non-Varronian Plautine *fabulae*, namely 26.6f. and 28.⁹⁹ In the former, Fronto quotes an uncertain fragment (fr. dubium 1 Lindsay (1904–5)) in a description of the mutual love felt between Marcus Aurelius and himself, and jokes about the amount of love Cratia, his wife, feels for him:

iam mihi cum Cratia certamen erit, quam timeo ut superare possim. Nam illius quidem, ut Plautus ait, '*amoris imber grandibus guttis non vestem modo permanavit, sed in medullam ultro fluit.*'

(I see that I shall have a competitor in Gratia, and I fear that I may not be able to surpass her. For, as Plautus says, in her case, 'not only has the *rain of love* drenched her dress with its *thunder-drops*, but soaked into her very marrow.')

This is, as has been pointed out (for example by Lindsay), similar to *Most.* 138–43:

mihi adventu suo *grandinem imbrem*[que] attulit;
haec verecundiam mi et virtutis modum
deturbavit detexitque a me ilico;
postilla optigere eam neglegens fui.
continuo *pro imbre amor* advenit tñ in cor meum†¹⁰⁰
is usque in pectus permanavit, permadefecit cor meum.

(With its arrival it brought to me *hail and rain*, it disturbed my modesty and my way of virtue and uncovered me instantly. After that I neglected to cover it again. Presently, *love* came *instead of rain* into my heart, and *penetrated* into my breast, and drenched my very heart.)

⁹⁸ On the character of the *miles gloriosus* cf. Wartenberg in Hofmann and Wartenberg (1973): The bragging element in the character is Plautine, an addition to the Greek characteristics, and found in all soldiers in surviving Roman comedy (p. 97). On Menander's more differentiated portrayal of his soldiers cf. Wartenberg in Hofmann and Wartenberg (1973: 49f.).

⁹⁹ *Amphitruo*, *Asinaria*, *Aulularia*, *Bacchides*, *Captivi*, *Casina*, *Menaechmi*, *Mercator*, *Miles*, *Mostellaria*, *Poenulus*, *Pseudolus*, *Rudens*, *Trinummus*, and *Truculentus*, are quoted or alluded to, cf. van den Hout's (1988) *nominum propriorum index* s.v. 'Plautus'.

¹⁰⁰ Leo, cited in Lindsay, corrects the last three words of v. 142 to 'tetigit guttis grandibus' because of the passage of Fronto.

Some plausible attempts exist to reconstruct a fragment of a lost play from the quotation, just by changing the word order slightly: the words *amoris imber guttis grandibus* | *non vestem modo permanavit, sed in medullam ultro fluit*, fit a regular trochaic metre.¹⁰¹ *Vestem* does not occur in the *Mostellaria*, and although it might be a natural substitution for Fronto quoting the passage from memory, the imagery of the two passages is quite different, suggesting that he is quoting from a lost play.¹⁰² Comedy for Fronto offers a situation known to both partners in the discussion, to which he can contrast their own experience favourably, as richer or emotionally more deeply felt than in the play. The joke, however, is still only wordplay. Typically, Fronto does not engage with the actual content of the passage—had he done so, the question of whether it is an adaptation of the *Mostellaria* or of an unknown play could be solved—but only concentrates on the inherent contrast of the words.

Gellius

Fronto's younger contemporary and disciple Gellius, too, is interested in rare words, but he does not take this research to quite the same extremes as Fronto, even though he admires his teacher.¹⁰³ He appreciates archaic authors, the genuineness of their art and the simple charms of antiquity, and deals with other authors of non-dramatic genres, too, for example prose authors like Claudius Quadrigarius or Sallust, but poets other than comedians or mimographers are treated only sporadically.

Furthermore, Gellius also values Greek authors.¹⁰⁴ He has obviously read more Sophocles and Euripides than Aeschylus (the three main tragedians are discussed in 13.19), but Marache questions whether Gellius has read a complete Greek tragedy,¹⁰⁵ although he displays some knowledge of the tragedians' *Lives*. On the other hand, Gellius praises Aristophanes¹⁰⁶ (*praef.* 20; 1.15.19), but he does not display wide knowledge of the comic writer. He

¹⁰¹ van den Hout (1999: 66).

¹⁰² Monda (2004: 92) is also inclined to see the fragment as independent of the *Mostellaria* and deriving from a lost play.

¹⁰³ Cf. Gell. NA 2.26, 13.29, 19.8, 19.10, Sandy (1997: 52f.). Gellius' circle in the *Noctes Atticae*, including Fronto, Favorinus, Sulpicius Apollinaris, and Gellius, discuss linguistic and literary issues pertaining to the *veteres* (cf. Deufert (2002: 212)).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Marache (1952: 185ff.). The lyric poets do not feature greatly in Gellius, the Alexandrians are completely absent.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Marache (1952: 189). Holford-Strevens (2003: 234) notes that Aeschylus was ignored by Fronto, Marcus Aurelius, and Apuleius, whilst Gellius probably knew him through compilations and anecdotes. Cf. id. p. 236: 'Acquaintance with Attic tragedy, essential to Hellenic culture, was not conferred by Roman schooling.'

¹⁰⁶ On Apuleius' knowledge and use of Aristophanes cf. Ch. 8 below.

shows much more interest and learning when it comes to New Comedy, and most notably Menander, whom he prefers over Caecilius in his famous comparison of Menander's *Plokion* with Caecilius' *Plocium* (2.23).¹⁰⁷ He at least gives the impression of having read Menander widely, not only for linguistic purposes, but also for his content, his portrayal of character (2.23), his view of the human condition, which he much admires, as well as the extent of Menander's knowledge. Compare the discussion of the length of gestation in 3.16, in which Plautus (*veterem poetam*, 'an old poet') and Menander (*poeta vetustior*, 'an older poet') as well as Caecilius are quoted along with the opinions of Aristotle and Hippocrates. How much he knew of other New Comedy authors is less certain.¹⁰⁸

Several Latin playwrights¹⁰⁹ and other *poetae veteres* are cited in Gellius.¹¹⁰ Ennius is often quoted or referred to by Gellius, whose interest in Ennius is partly as a source for archaic words, but also based on the ancient author's moral attitudes.¹¹¹ Ennius, and Plautus a close second, according to Mattiacci,¹¹² form the most often quoted authors in Gellius.

The two main mime authors, Publilius and Laberius, are sometimes referred to. Publilius, ignored by Fronto,¹¹³ is slightly less appreciated by Gellius than Laberius (17.14.1), but still praised for his *sententiae* ... *lepidae* ('charming sayings', 17.14.3; adapted). Laberius, however, receives a mixed press in Gellius' work; he attracts occasional praise,¹¹⁴ but of primary interest to Gellius is Laberius' vocabulary: his choice of words is occasionally admired (3.12.2, 19.2.21) and Gellius quotes liberally from Laberius' mimes for words, and for his own part praises Laberius' elegant verses.¹¹⁵ Laberius' language and choice of words, however, receives some harsh criticism from Sulpicius Apollinaris, Gellius' teacher, who talks about (19.13.3) 'the excessively low and vulgar words which Laberius introduced into the usage of the Latin language'; translation adapted—('a Laberio ignobilia nimis et sordentia in

¹⁰⁷ Marache (1952: 190ff.).

¹⁰⁸ Marache (1952: 190) suspects he primarily knows only Menander.

¹⁰⁹ Marache (1952: 226–45, esp. 227ff.) for Plautus.

¹¹⁰ Livius Andronicus' *Odyssia* is his only work cited, Naevius' plays are quoted a few times, cf. Holford-Strevens (2003: 213ff.). As for tragedians, Accius and Pacuvius are both highly estimated by Gellius (cf. e.g. 1.24.4) but receive far less attention than the comic writers. Pacuvius may perhaps be quoted in Apul. *Flor.* 18.6, but this is uncertain (Cf. Mattiacci (1986: 180).

¹¹¹ Marache (1952: 269).

¹¹² Mattiacci (1986: 191). Cf. also Holford-Strevens (2003: 215); Marache (1952: 227).

¹¹³ Cf. Marache (1952: 268).

¹¹⁴ Cf. 10.17 (Laberius' fragment on Democritus), or 6.9.3 and 18 (the praise of Laberius' grammar). Laberius' character is discussed in the anecdote about Laberius and Caesar (8.15, in a passage that has not survived but where we have the title).

¹¹⁵ Cf. Marache (1952: 233).

usum linguae Latinae intromissa sunt'). Generally, thus, Gellius' circle seems to be rather critical of Laberius. Holford-Strevens¹¹⁶ argues that Gellius considered Laberius as having antiquity but not authority—a damning judgement. In 16.7, for example, Laberius is accused of inventing Latin words too freely (*praelicenter*), almost a crime in Gellius' mind. Knowledge of mime is thus evident in Gellius, but a rather mixed attitude to its authority for language and content emerges.

Plautus is admired for his language, diction, and grammar as well as for his life (cf. NA 3.3.14) and learning, resulting in a sound appreciation and thorough study of Plautus' originality and genius.

There is also evidence for Gellius having studied Caecilius (cf. 2.23, mentioned above), while Terence again is mostly ignored, and there is no evidence that Gellius read even a single play by Terence from beginning to end.¹¹⁷ He is not particularly interested in Terence's language,¹¹⁸ which is more realistic and less exuberant than Plautus', and even if it is archaic, it is of less interest to the archaists due to its lesser linguistic range.

Gellius' interest in Plautus is widespread, ranging from the twenty-one Varronian *fabulae* to non-Varronian plays. Evidence for the latter is *Noctes Atticae* 3.3, in which Gellius claims that he has read non-Varronian *fabulae* recently,¹¹⁹ but some scholars express doubt as to his veracity.¹²⁰ Even if these statements were indeed 'dialogue fiction', as some scholars claim, the fact remains that Gellius must still have assumed that his audience was able to believe them at least in a fictional setting, which suggests that knowledge of non-Varronian *fabulae* in élite literary circles was not taken as an impossibility.

Caecilius is, as for Fronto, second only to Plautus. If read alone, Gellius argues in the comparison between Menander and Caecilius (2.23), the Latin author's comedies are pleasing enough, but they lose through the comparison.¹²¹ Gellius obviously tries to avoid comparing a Plautine adaptation to its Menandrian original, which he could have done easily but which would have

¹¹⁶ Cf. Holford-Strevens (2003: 179 with n. 34, and p. 86 generally) on Apollinaris' reservations on Laberius.

¹¹⁷ On Gellius' disregard for Terence cf. Marache (1952: 231).

¹¹⁸ e.g. 6.14.6.

¹¹⁹ *Boeotia*, *Nervolaria*, and *Fretum*.

¹²⁰ Holford-Strevens (2003: 67) takes the present tense to indicate the story to be artistic rather than factual; cf. *ibid.* p. 158 for Gellius' sources and 193ff. for the authenticity debate, where he is less sceptical about Gellius' claims. Quotations from non-Varronian plays include e.g. that by a lawyer, e.g., who quotes *Astraba* at 11.7, the *Trigemini* are quoted in 6.9, an unknown play in 18.12. Jocelyn (1988: 68) suspects these—and most of the quotations from the twenty-one—to derive from grammarians. Cf. also Leo (1912a: 70). Deufert (2002: 214) leaves the question whether Gellius read e.g. the *Boeotia*, *Nervolaria*, or *Fretum* (3.3.) at all open.

¹²¹ Cf. Marache (1952: 229f.).

been detrimental to Plautus¹²²—even if the *Plokion* is the only Menandrian play he quotes *in extenso* or by title. Instead, he takes Caecilius, in many respects rather Plautine, and compares him unfavourably with Menander. Menander, he argues, is more simple and delightful, while Caecilius meddles too much with the sentiments and adds farcical elements.¹²³ Perhaps against his will, he has to admit that the Greek comedies, because of their literary qualities, are more to his liking.

Gellius follows Fronto's example in his love for Plautus: at 19.8.6 he calls him 'linguae Latinae decus' ('that glory of the Latin tongue'), and quotes him constantly for word formation.¹²⁴ He also treats Plautus philologically and shows interest not only in his lexicon but also in the content (discussion of gestation 3.16); although his concern to identify only genuine Plautine words may be part of the reason for his trying to establish the proper Plautine canon; yet his interests go beyond the strict limits of the Varroian Canon.

Gellius' language is not as innovative and unusual as Apuleius'. It is simpler, and the archaism is more subdued. Even when it is accepted that much archaic poetry other than Plautus is lost, the findings¹²⁵ point strongly towards the preferred use of Plautus by the archaists whenever they employ archaic words. Terence, on the other hand, as we have seen, is sadly understudied. Comedy had, however, to be used properly, in its proper context: Gellius for example criticizes in 11.7.1–6 the imperfect usage of comedy in oratory.

Thus in both Gellius and Fronto an inclination towards Plautus (and Plautus above all other comic writers) is discernible. In the case of Fronto it is mainly because of Plautus' inventiveness and exuberant employment of unusual words; in the case of Gellius, this is supplemented by an equal interest in reading the plays as literary texts and as sources for knowledge and enjoyment of their own value.

Apuleius

Apuleius' education in Rome, and perhaps already in Carthage, included the study of the *veteres auctores*. Apuleius probably met Gellius in Athens,¹²⁶ and

¹²² For us, this is now only possible with Handley's inaugural discussion (1968) of the *Dis exapaton* papyrus and the *Bacchides*.

¹²³ Cf. NA 2.23.11.

¹²⁴ Praise: 1.7.17, 6.17.4. Word formation: 6.9; 13.23.11; 15.15.

¹²⁵ Cf. Marache (1957: 97 and 263) for some statistics.

¹²⁶ Apuleius' education: cf. Deufert (2002: 205). Acquaintance with Gellius: Holford-Strevens (2003: 22–6).

was probably 'exposed to a standardized curriculum and to an educational stance that placed a premium on the views of the past.'¹²⁷ Like other sophists, he must have used handbooks, compendia and canonized literature to find his literary parallels,¹²⁸ or literary examples of heroic figures linked to particular deeds, for example Alexander or Pythagoras. This sort of name-dropping and handbook knowledge can be traced in the *Florida* (for example, *Flor.* 15), but Apuleius' knowledge of pre-classical Latin cannot derive from handbooks and grammars alone. Like his precursors, he must have read the archaic poets himself extensively to find his unusual words,¹²⁹ in addition to using them in rhetorical training for *ethopoia*.

The beginnings of two tragedies by Accius are preserved through Apuleius: *Philoctetes* (in *Socr.* 176f., which follows shortly on a paraphrase of another possible Accian play *Socr.* 174f.¹³⁰) and *Phoenissae* (*Flor.* 10.1); but when it comes to tragedians in Apuleius, Ennius has pride of place. He is often referred to admiringly; quotations range from the tragedies through the *Hedyphagetica* to the *Annales*.¹³¹ The latter especially are often quoted with parodic effect. Unmarked quotations in Apuleius mostly derive from Plautus and Ennius.¹³² The only classical poet who receives several quotations in Apuleius is Vergil, whom Gellius also liked (cf. 20.1.54).¹³³ Plautus, Accius, and Ennius are the dramatists of choice,¹³⁴ although, uniquely, Seneca is also used.¹³⁵

The word *mimus* does not occur in any philosophical book, and Apuleius never names any mime authors like Laberius¹³⁶ or Publilius, although he certainly knew and used mimes. Again, Plautus is given pride of place among all comic writers in his field of reference; and when it comes to imitation of

¹²⁷ Sandy (1997: 30), cf. 33.

¹²⁸ Sandy (1997: 64), cf. 73ff.

¹²⁹ General studies: Koziol (1872), a mere list of words; Medan (1926); Bernhard (1927). Archaic poets in Apuleius: Mattiacci (1986).

¹³⁰ The precise nature of the play is uncertain, cf. Harrison (2000: 170 with n. 134); cf. Mattiacci (1994) for a comprehensive discussion of Accius in Apuleius.

¹³¹ Cf. Mattiacci (1986: 181–90) for a discussion of the references, and ead. (1994) for Accius.

¹³² Mattiacci (1986: 192) considers the quotations from Ennius as carrying more weight than those from Plautus: 'le citazioni dirette [sc. of Plautus] non sono né così numerose, né così importanti come quelle di Ennio'.

¹³³ Plautus and Ennius: Mattiacci (1986: 162), Vergil: ead. p. 163f.

¹³⁴ There may be one unmarked echo of Gnaeus Matius, a composer of mimiambes, in *Met.* 2.16: *pullulatim labellis* may recall his fragment 12, 'columbulatim labra conserens labris' ('joining lips with lips in the manner of doves'), cf. Mattiacci (1986: 179.) The concept of doves' kisses, however, also occurs in Plaut. *Asin.* 209f., cf. Van Mal-Maeder (2001: ad 2.16). This lack of provable intertextuality with mimographers, although perhaps due to their badly preserved state, is however remarkable.

¹³⁵ Cf. Ch. 11.2 below.

¹³⁶ Laberius is not even discussed by Marache (1952) in connection with Apuleius.

language Plautus is by far the most important poet in Apuleius' work, often cited without even being named: Apuleius supposes that the work of Plautus is known to his audience and thus thinks it unnecessary to give the sources for his Plautine quotations.¹³⁷ Like Gellius, he mostly ignores Terence, and finds in Afranius only pretty, moral maxims.

Apuleius follows his archaizing friends' example by using choice archaic words and discussing them in his speeches (for example *Flor.* 9.7f.), but since his works are not instruction manuals about how to find these archaic words, as are, for example, Fronto's letters to the Caesars, or random snippets of information about archaic words, such as Gellius provides in some of the notes in the *Noctes Atticae*, his agenda is different. Apuleius goes further than Fronto and Gellius: instead of making the archaizing of language his ultimate goal, he utilizes it to create his own idiosyncratic style and literary texture. He integrates his archaizing choices into his text, and quotes pre-classical literature as models in order to make a point which is not linguistic; thus he is able to refer to Plaut. *Mil.* 4 in *Socr.* 145¹³⁸ as an *exemplum*, and not as a good source for a choice word.

Apuleius' philosophical works illustrate the archaizing language as practised by Fronto and Gellius, as well as some more inventive use of Plautine material. In the *Florida*, too, he uses archaic words, but does not display the widespread use of typical Plautine words that he shows in the *Metamorphoses*. The *Apologia* is all in all more classical and Ciceronian, but displays to a lesser, as the novel to a greater extent, carefully chosen Plautine language to evoke a comic subtext.¹³⁹ Although archaizing words are rarer in the *Apologia* than in the *Metamorphoses*, they still exist and contribute, as we shall see, to the comic characterization of Apuleius' opponents. Although references to the theatre occur in all Apuleian works,¹⁴⁰ Apuleius' imitation of Plautus has little to do with simple archaism and imitation, but must be functional—language is a vehicle for meaning.¹⁴¹ Apuleius obviously adapts his language according to the choice of his genre, and the fact that in the *Metamorphoses* we find a closer link to Plautine language than in other works by Apuleius is an intentional, *literary* decision. Thus Plautine language acquires added functionality, and, I would argue, this function consists in pointing us towards Plautine scenes, constructions and analogies, which are to be highlighted by the employment of recognizably Plautine words.

¹³⁷ Marache (1952: 329).

¹³⁸ Cf. below Ch. 3.2.

¹³⁹ Steinmetz (1982: 374ff.)—On the problem of 'Africitas' cf. the discussion between Powell (2001) and Edwards (2001).

¹⁴⁰ Thus Callebat (1998: 190 = 1964).

¹⁴¹ Thus now also Deufert (2002: 206).

In the novel, Apuleius' unique style straddles the language of slang and that of the highest register, and he tries to use the right word for the right situation.¹⁴² This is not the place to discuss Apuleius' linguistic idiosyncrasies in detail;¹⁴³ instead, I will concentrate on his conscious use of Plautine language. Callebat explains its use as necessary characterization:

These numerous lexical and grammatical instances, borrowed especially from Plautus, which place the characters and their words into the *dramatic* situation of the ancient comic theatre, doubtless function as a *representation* of the things said, but they cause an *alienation effect*, too, affecting the veracity of the setting and the projected dialogues.¹⁴⁴

Characters of the novel who are inspired by comedy have a tendency to use Plautine language. Venus, for example, in *Cupid and Psyche* is thus characterized.¹⁴⁵ The divorce formula used by Cupid to Psyche (5.26): 'toro meo divorte tibi que res tuas habeto' ('Leave my bed this instant, and take your goods and chattels with you') recalls not only Plaut. *Amph.* 928 and legal language, but uses the verb *divorto*, a Plautine word ('to divorce', *Epid.* 403),¹⁴⁶ perhaps to indicate that the couple's separation will be temporary, without any serious permanent consequences.

Callebat shows that Apuleius' language in the *Metamorphoses* has a large element of the *sermo cotidianus* ('everyday speech'), displaying a precise observation of his contemporary social milieu and daily life.¹⁴⁷ The Latin language had developed since the times of Cicero and Caesar, and the living Latin of the second century AD is a natural development of features already found in the Latin of authors of the first century AD.¹⁴⁸ Words common in the second century are for example *ducatus* ('leadership')¹⁴⁹ or *demeare* ('to descend')¹⁵⁰, and they represent normal developments of a living language.

¹⁴² Different levels of Apuleius' language: Callebat (1998: 104f. = 1978: 172).

¹⁴³ See e.g. Callebat (1968), (1978) etc.; Koziol (1872); Medan (1926).

¹⁴⁴ Callebat (1978: 173): 'Les nombreux faits, lexicaux et grammaticaux, emprunts surtout à Plaute, qui installent les personnages et leurs paroles dans la situation *dramatique* du théâtre comique ancien, accusent sans doute la fonction de *représentation* des énoncés, mais déterminent également un *dépaysement*, affectent la vraisemblance de la mise en scène et des dialogues projetés.' (author's italics). Cf. Callebat (1998 = 1964) for discussions of this kind.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Callebat (1968: 504).

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Callebat (1998: 186f. = 1964).

¹⁴⁷ Callebat (1968: 118). Popular words like *agaso* ('stable-boy') and *casula* ('small cottage') or grammatical structures like the absence of interrogative articles (e.g. *-ne* in *Met.* 1.20 'tu autem, inquit vir, ... ornatus accedis huic fabulae?' 'The man said, "Your clothes and deportment show that you are a man of culture; can you believe that the story is true?") belong to this category.

¹⁴⁸ Callebat (1968: 364f.).

¹⁴⁹ Also Suet. *Tib.* 19, *Nero* 35.

¹⁵⁰ Also Fronto 60.4 *ad M. C.* 4.3 etc.—Cf. Callebat's (1968: 135) remark: 'un terme qui n'est pas spécifiquement populaire, mais qui appartient à la langue vivante de l'époque.'

Apuleius, however, does not leave it there, but creates a unique language by inserting this everyday language into a more literary discourse.¹⁵¹

Archaizing elements, on the other hand, contribute to the literary flavour of the *Metamorphoses*. There is a certain difficulty in ascertaining which words and constructions are intentional references to Plautus: there are frequent interferences between an artificially archaizing language and the *sermo cotidianus*.¹⁵² For example, *Met.* 8.26, 'Sed postquam non cervam pro virgine sed asinum pro homine succidaneum videre nare detorta magistrum suum varie cavillantur' ('But when they saw that an ass was there in place of a man—and not a hind for a maiden!—they turned up their noses, and taunted their master with various comments'), at the same time features contemporary words, images of a familiar style (*nare detorta*, 'with upturned nose'), and archaisms (*succidaneum*, literally [a sacrificial victim] 'killed as a substitute') as well as an erudite allusion to Euripides' *Iphigeneia*.¹⁵³ The manneristic literary style of the allusion and the archaic language together, however, seem to form an intentional reference to the staginess of the scene.

Another focal point for Plautine insertions into the texture of the language of the *Metamorphoses* is sometimes found in ironic passages.¹⁵⁴ Antiphrasis¹⁵⁵ is found in Plautus, but also in Cicero. Word plays in the *Metamorphoses* are often based on Plautine puns, for example the interplay between a simple verb and its compound.¹⁵⁶ Apuleius and Plautus share a delight in neologisms.¹⁵⁷ Other words linked with comedy are for example *cordolium* ('heartache, heartfelt grief', *Met.* 9.21), which otherwise occurs only in Plautus, at *Cist.* 65 and *Poen.* 299.¹⁵⁸ Diminutives, or certain verbs like *abligurrire* ('to eat up dainties; to squander'),¹⁵⁹ evoke a comic background. Comic junctures of words include for example *ergo igitur* ('therefore thus').¹⁶⁰ A typically Plautine

¹⁵¹ Callebat (1968: 121)—Koziol (1872: 310f.) is too undifferentiated, considering 'vulgar' together with 'archaic' words.

¹⁵² Callebat (1968: 369).

¹⁵³ Analysed in Callebat (1968: 458), (1998: 186 = 1964): *succidaneus* occurring in Plaut. *Epid.* 139, is reprised by Fronto 3.18, 113.16, and Gell. NA 4.6.2.

¹⁵⁴ For the following: Callebat (1968: 467–73).

¹⁵⁵ Cf. *Met.* 1.7 *boni latrones* ('some brigands of massive physique'), 1.13 *bona Panthia* ('the kindly Panthia') etc.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. *Met.* 6.29 'sic nos diversa tendentes et in causa finali ... contententes' ('As we pulled in opposite directions, engaged in a boundary dispute ...').

¹⁵⁷ Examples in Callebat (1998: 178 = 1978).

¹⁵⁸ Callebat (1968: 506ff.).

¹⁵⁹ *Met.* 10.14 'iucundiora eligens abligurribam dulcia' ('I began ... to select and lick clean the more luscious sweets', cf. for the close parallel Ter. *Eun.* 235 'itidem patria qui abligurrierat bona' ('someone who had guzzled up his patrimony like me')—for Apuleius' imperfect cf. Callebat (1968: 126), for comic parallels *ibid.* p. 512f. Cf. also below Ch. 4.4.

¹⁶⁰ Callebat (1968: 530f.); Keulen (2003a: 147).

adverb is *adfatum*,¹⁶¹ which Apuleius uses constantly in the context of food (2.19; 4.1; 4.22 etc.).¹⁶² *Efflictim* ('passionately') occurs repeatedly in amatory situations in both Plautus and Apuleius, and recalls situations in comedy of desperate love.¹⁶³ The register of contemporary language in the *Metamorphoses* is deliberately sprinkled with archaic words to create an artistic literary language,¹⁶⁴ but also a coherent comic context.

Callebat shows how the employment of single words intimately linked with Plautine language and situations, for example *angiportus* ('alley'), *era* ('mistress of the house') or *scitamenta* ('delicacies'),¹⁶⁵ substantives which go back to Plautus, evokes comedy. Grammatical allusions to Plautus include for example the use of the accusative with verbs like *frui* ('to enjoy') or *fungi* ('to execute, perform'). Amorous apostrophes, like *mea festivitas* ('my heart's delight', *Met.* 2.10) also recall Plautine language (e.g. *Cas.* 135f., *Poen.* 389).¹⁶⁶

In his novel Apuleius not only archaizes by using Plautine language, but also wants to evoke the imagery and scenes accompanying this diction. Evidence for the use of Plautine language can also be seen in Sisenna's fragments, or in Lucilius' and Varro's (Menippean) satires.¹⁶⁷ Thus Apuleius' tradition of the use of Plautus is based on two foundations: the archaist's predilection for Plautine words, and the satirical novel writer's tradition of using comic language to express comic situations.

Callebat notes that the use of Plautine language is especially common in Apuleius' dialogues, thus recalling the dialogic structure of comedy.¹⁶⁸ An accumulation of Plautine words and structures in a situation also found in comedy, for example in the scenes between the lovers Lucius and Photis in *Met.* 2, from which some of the examples above are taken, surely enhances the scenes' comicality. Further examples of pleonasm or other reinforcements of expression could be added, but these examples may suffice to illustrate that

¹⁶¹ Cf. Plaut. *Bacch.* 497, *Mil.* 980, *Poen.* 534 'ubi bibas, edas ... quantum velis usque adfatim' ('where you can drink and eat as much as you want to complete satisfaction').

¹⁶² Callebat (1968: 475f.) argues for the word's link to Plautus despite the existence of other non-Plautine instances.

¹⁶³ Cf. *Met.* 3.16 *efflictim deperit* ('she is passionately', cf. 5.6; 5.23) and Plaut. *Amph.* 517 *efflictim amare* ('to love passionately'), cf. *Merc.* 444; *Poen.* 96, 1094; *Cas.* 49; Laberius' *Belonistria* (Bonaria 1955–6: fr. 22): 'domina nostra privignum suum amat efflictim', 'Our mistress passionately loves her stepson.' Cf. Karakasis (2005: 194) and Callebat (1968: 476); *deperire* is comic, too, cf. *ibid.* p. 486.

¹⁶⁴ Callebat (1968: 478.) Cf. Keulen (2003a: 194).

¹⁶⁵ Those and other examples: Callebat (1968: 481ff.).

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Callebat (1968: 499) for more examples.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Callebat (1968: 473ff.) on the especially Plautine substratum of Apuleius' language and its possible link to his predecessors; esp. 477 for similarities with Sisenna and 478 with Varro.

¹⁶⁸ Callebat (1968: 498); in general: Callebat (1998: 186ff. = 1964).

Apuleius not only uses Plautine language, but also employs it carefully to construct a comic atmosphere.

Apuleius thus uses comedy to 'comitize' his novel. He stresses the funnier elements of the story, and inserts archaic and unusual Plautine words deliberately to add a comic flavour. Other archaic authors, as well as other dramatic authors (including Seneca), get a look-in in both Apuleius' language and his literary texture, but Plautus is Apuleius' prime source for comic language and, as we shall see, plot development.

Apuleius' language in the *Metamorphoses* is therefore an artificial amalgam, which reflects the unusual content of the novel by a similarly experimental and comitized language,¹⁶⁹ which goes further than the intentions of his fellow archaists. Apuleius' language is original, idiosyncratic, a mixture of poetry and prose as well as slang, and of high language, neologisms and Gorgianic rhetoric. A large part of its artificiality also derives from the use of Plautine language and the evocation of Plautine scenes and imagery through this language, which forms a substantial part of the work.

2.7. CONCLUSION

In the second century, knowledge of Greek as well as Latin drama was widespread; the existence of theatrical performances or recitals in symposia and theatres particularly shows that drama can be seen as creating a common sphere of knowledge for the well-educated in Apuleius' time. Greek comedy offered wit, archaism, and a feeling of élite status. Roman comedy and archaic tragedy must have given the archaizers to whom Apuleius belonged a similar feeling of belonging to the fashionable élite. Mime and pantomime as entertainment for the masses were less literary, and Apuleius, as a conscious member of this literary élite, lays stress on tragedy and comic drama: above all Menandrian New Comedy and Plautus become a vehicle for sophisticated ideas and display of education.

At the time of Apuleius' writing the *Metamorphoses*,¹⁷⁰ reading and excerpting comedy was part of rhetorical training. The archaists intensely studied the text of Plautus in the second-century edition.¹⁷¹ Fronto and Gellius, primarily interested in finding the right word, may, I suggest, have

¹⁶⁹ Callebaut (1968: 114f.).

¹⁷⁰ The matter of dating is not yet closed, cf. Harrison (2000: 9ff.) for the evidence and further literature. I would like to argue for a late date, namely the 180s AD.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Deufert (2002: 213ff.).

concentrated on the approved twenty-one Varronian plays. Apuleius, looking also for good stories, may not have been so concerned about the guaranteed authenticity of his source, and may have read more widely. The knowledge we can presuppose for Apuleius is as follows: the twenty-one Varronian plays, and perhaps a number of no longer extant plays, as well as extensive or less extensive quotations of lost plays from antiquarians or grammarians in addition to other now lost comic playwrights like Caecilius in Latin; also the comedies of Terence and some plays from the corpus of Menander and Philemon in Greek. A certain amount of knowledge of Aristophanes is also in evidence, as will be shown below (cf. Ch. 8 below).

Mimographers are never quoted by name in Apuleius, and their importance to Apuleius' language and literary patterns has to be inferred. He obviously knows mime from contemporary performances, and influence of mime can be assumed throughout the novel, as will be seen in his portrayal of Aristomenes and Socrates, or the adultery tales in *Met.* 9. As to his knowledge of Greek dramatists, the study of Gellius' interest has shown that a good knowledge of Menander (and to a lesser extent of Philemon) may be assumed for this literary circle, as well as a somewhat less developed knowledge of Aristophanes. Greek tragedy is mainly represented through Euripides, although stories about (rather than the plays of) the other tragedians seem to be known to Gellius and Apuleius.

Though Fronto is interested in rhetoric and style, Gellius is primarily a reader of archaic literature for its literary qualities. In both authors Plautus is the most often quoted dramatist, mainly for his language, but occasionally also for his content. Similarly, Plautus is the dramatist who can be shown to be imitated most frequently by Apuleius. Thus this study, whilst taking tragedy and mime into account, too, will concentrate on this Roman comic writer.

Drama, Philosophy, and Rhetoric: Apuleius' Minor Works

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In addition to the *Apologia* and *Metamorphoses* (to be discussed in subsequent chapters), Apuleius' less rhetorical or fictional works such as the philosophical books confidently attributed to him, like *De Deo Socratis* and *De Platone et eius Dogmate*, also contain, as has been shown, a certain stratum of Plautine vocabulary. Furthermore, both the *Florida* and an intriguing poem, the *Anechomenos*, show some interesting instances of both quotation and adaptation of Plautine language and imagery into the argument. In this chapter Apuleius' method of using quotations from tragic and comic authors (as well as merely comic language) in these works will be scrutinized.

3.2. QUOTATIONS FROM DRAMA IN APULEIUS' *DE DEO SOCRATIS*

Though Apuleius' use of comedy in a serious philosophical book like the *De Deo Socratis* seems at first sight unlikely, he nevertheless quotes comedy several times¹ to embellish his discourse. Using quotations from drama within a philosophical argument is not uncommon, and Apuleius could have found this technique in Cicero. For example, Cicero in *Nat. Deor.* 3.68–73 uses passages from Accius' *Medea* and *Atreus* tragedies to make a philosophical point; he then follows this up immediately with a quotation from Terence's *Eunuchus* (ll. 46–9) and a few quotations from and references to Caecilius' comedies, thus using both tragedy and comedy to make one single

¹ Hunink (1998: 98ff.) gives a survey of the marked and unmarked comedy citations in *Socr.* and *Flor.*

philosophical argument, and at the same time drawing attention to the contrast between the two genres.²

In addition to the simple use of Plautine linguistic material to flavour his prose with archaic diction, Apuleius utilizes comic writers in his argument, as he elsewhere uses philosophical authorities. He even once quotes Terence (the only marked occurrence in his works): this use cannot be explained by a mere predilection for archaic words, as Terentian diction is less unusual and archaizing than Plautus', and is generally ignored by the other archaists. The two marked comic quotations in *De Deo Socratis*, however, are only two among several references to Latin literature, which include not only 'classical' authors such as Vergil,³ but also often 'archaic' writers.⁴ References to plays, mainly tragedies, include plays by Ennius and Accius, namely an unidentified tragedy by Ennius (188f. Jocelyn) in *Socr.* 121, an allusion to Ennius 380 Ribbeck in *Socr.* 131,⁵ and a possibly Accian quotation in *Socr.* 174f.⁶ The only long quotation from a tragedy is *Socr.* 176f., with five lines from the beginning of Accius' *Philoctetes* (520–4 Ribbeck), in a protreptic passage on praising, skilfully integrated into an argument about the value of a man's morals being greater than his ancestry.

Inclite, parva prodite patria,
 Nomine celebri claroque potens
 Pectore, Achivis classibus auctor,
 Gravis Dardaniis gentibus ultor,
 Laertiade

(Man of fame, brought forth by a small country,
 Powerful in a renowned name and a glorious heart,
 Counsellor of the Greek fleets,
 Terrible revenger of the peoples of Troy,
 Son of Laertes.)

Apuleius' argument identifies Odysseus and Socrates, and he uses the quotation to summarize their inner qualities as opposed to any other possible claims to fame they could have. The quotation, it seems, is purely ornamental.

² Cic. *Nat. Deor.* 3.71f.: 'Medea modo et Atreus commemorabatur a nobis, heroicae personae inita subductaque ratione nefaria scelera meditantes. Quid levitates comicae parumne semper in ratione versantur?' ('Just now Medea and Atreus were mentioned by me, characters of the heroic past planning their heinous crimes with considered and calculated reason. What, do the frivolities of comedy not often enough deal with reason?'). On Cicero cf. Wright (1931).

³ Cf. the critical apparatus in Thomas' (1908) Teubner edition of Apuleius' philosophical books. Classical quotations include Verg. *Georg.* 1.5f. (*Socr.* 116), Verg. *Aen.* 3.516 (unmarked, *Socr.* 120), Lucr. 5.705f. and 575f. (*Socr.* 118) etc.

⁴ Discussion of quoted authors in Apuleius: Mattiacci (1986). Jocelyn (1967: 55f.) notes that Apuleius might have quoted Ennius occasionally from first-hand, but Ennius' epic was more popular than his drama at that period.

⁵ Jocelyn (1967: 330) expresses uncertainty.

⁶ Discussion of the possible identifications: Harrison (2000: 170 with n. 134).

While tragedy prevails in the more ‘serious’ philosophical works, and also has a substantial space in *Socr.*, where epic and tragedy provide many literary parallels for the characterization of gods as *daimones*, this work is also very interesting for its comic references, which do not occur to the same extent in the *De Mundo* and in the *De Platone*.

De Deo Socratis 145

In *Socr.* 145 Apuleius paraphrases Plaut. *Mil.* 4, one of several passages from the beginning of a play: ‘prorsus quod Plautinus miles super clipeo suo gloriatur, praestringens oculorum aciem hostibus,’ (‘This is precisely what Plautus’ soldier boasts about his shield, “dazzling the gaze of the enemy”’). This suggests that Apuleius, not unlike Cicero, can paraphrase comedy sources which he knows by heart, as his paraphrase is in prose and thus clearly not a direct quotation. But as it forms the third quotation in a tripartite sequence,⁷ there might be more behind the citation than meets the eye, although its placement in its context is problematic: ‘it seems to illustrate the earlier point of the dazzling reflective powers of the *daemones*, not the current point of their invisibility’.⁸

This reference to Plautus picks up the Ennian quotation in *Socr.* 121—‘Suspicientes in hoc perfectissimo mundi, ut ait Ennius, clipeo miris fulgoribus variata celata.’ (‘looking up at the multicoloured decorations with their astonishing splendour on the most perfect “shield of the firmament” (as Ennius would have it)’—⁹ which is to the same effect. The actual point of the Plautine comparison, which gives it meaning and its *tertium comparationis* in the first place, is, however, not included in Apuleius’ quotation. The Plautine passage runs (*Mil.* 1–4):

Curate ut *splendor* meo sit clipeo clarior
quam solis *radii* esse olim quom sudumst solent,
ut, ubi usus veniat, contra conserta manu
praestringat oculorum aciem in acie hostibus.

(Make sure that the *splendour* of my shield is brighter than the *rays* of the sun in a the clear sky, so that, when it needs to be used in the thick of combat, it dazzles my enemies’ eyesight in battle with them.)

⁷ It follows after his own Latin translation of Homer *Il.* 1.198 and a direct and unadapted quotation of Verg. *Aen.* 1.440.

⁸ Harrison (2001a) in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink (2001: 204 n. 41).

⁹ Ennius 188f. Jocelyn.

In Plautus it is clear that the shield is indeed supposed to be brighter and shinier than the sun, which aligns its dazzle with the exterior of the *daimones*, whose bodies Apuleius described in the preceding passage:

sed fila corporum possident rara et *splendida* et tenuia usque adeo ut *radios* omnis *nostrī tuoris* et raritate transmittant et *splendore* reverberent et subtilitate frustrentur (*Socr.* 144f.).

(rather, the strands of their bodies are so loose-knit, *lustrous*, and fine-spun that all the *rays* of *our gaze* are let through by their loose texture, thrown back by their *lustre*, and baffled by their fineness.)

It is remarkable that the keyword *splendor* is not repeated in Apuleius' paraphrase of Plautus, although it is there in the original passage. Other key words, such as *radii* (Plautus) / *radios* (Apuleius) and the description of the eyesight as *nostrī tuoris* / *oculorum aciem*, appear also in Apuleius' introduction of the discussion and Plautus' text, but not in Apuleius' quotation from Plautus. Thus, if our transmitted text is right, and the mediaeval scribes have not omitted the more important point of the comparison,¹⁰ Apuleius himself must have left out the *tertium comparationis* in his quotation deliberately.

The latter seems more likely, considering how allusively he proceeds in the use of this particular quotation: for instance, he mentions Plautus as his source, but does not give the title of the play. However, by his phrase *miles ... gloriatur*, the reference to the *Miles Gloriosus* must have become obvious to at least the more educated members of his audience.¹¹ The reading public of the literature-conscious Second Sophistic is thus expected to know and recognize allusions even if they are not there in the quotation but only referred to in the text.

Furthermore, the four lines Apuleius refers to in his passage are the first four of the whole play. These are the lines by which a play has to be identified and recognized by an ancient reader opening his papyrus roll; thus they can safely be considered as common knowledge among the educated. The use of the first few lines of the play, together with the easily identifiable title of the comedy (*miles ... gloriatur*), is meant to ensure that the correct quotation springs up in the mind of Apuleius' audience, without his actually giving the game away or quoting it exactly.

In this case, Apuleius winks at his audience, creating a feeling of superior knowledge as well as companionship in them by letting them recognize an allusion to a literary classic.

¹⁰ This seems to have happened in *Socr.* 150, where the second and important line of the quotation from Verg. *Aen.* 9.184f. is omitted in the manuscript transmission.

¹¹ Fronto refers to the *miles gloriosus* character (p. 175f.).

Apuleius' allusion is however not only used as a manipulative bonding mechanism between speaker and audience: he also manipulates his audience in a subtle way by slightly changing the passage he quotes. Plautus' pun, in the style of a polyptoton, on *acies* as eyesight and battle-line, fitting the context of a soldier speaking about dazzling his enemies' vision, is reduced to only one meaning, in Apuleius, that of the eyesight being impeded by the splendour of the shield (since he omits the words *in acie*). Thus he focuses the reader's understanding of *acies* on the factor of the invisibility of the *daimones* and the impossibility of human eyes perceiving them, as the bodies of the *daimones* are invisible because, as he says at the beginning of his discussion, 'nulla in illis terrena soliditas locum luminis occupavit [...] qua soliditate necessario offensa *acies* inmoretur' (*Socr.* 144), ('they have no earthy solidity which can occupy the field of our vision [...] by which our line of *sight* would necessarily be caught and held').

Thus this Plautine phrase, although at first sight rather incongruously employed, sums up the whole argument about the *daimones'* invisibility in one single sentence. The manipulated Apuleian version in combination with his readers' presupposed knowledge of Plautus comprises the issue of *Socr.* 144 in a nutshell. By consciously leaving out the point of reference, Apuleius indirectly compliments his readers on their knowledge and, at the same time, by manipulating the evidence slightly and thus getting rid of unwanted points of reference such as the allusion to military matters, he makes sure that they follow his argument more closely than a full quotation would have allowed.

Gellius quotes a mime fragment attributed to Laberius' *Restio* ('The Rope-maker'),¹² on Democritus blinding himself voluntarily by looking into a shield:

Democritus Abderites physicus *philosophus*
clipeum constituit contra exortum Hyperionis,
 oculos effodere ut posset *splendore aereo*.
 Ita *radiis solis aciem effodit luminis*,
 malis bene esse ne videret civibus.

(Democritus, Abdera's scientist, set up a *shield* to face Hyperion's rise, so that he might destroy his eyesight by *blaze of brass*. Thus *by the sun's rays he destroyed his eyes*, lest he should see bad citizens' good luck; trans. adapted)

Apuleius thus could have used a mime, in which a philosopher uses a shield in combination with the concept of eyesight, and the beams of the sun and eyesight, but instead chooses to use a Plautine reference, which at first glance, since its subject is a soldier rather than a philosopher, is less apt. Apuleius'

¹² From Gell. 10.17.1 = Bonaria (1955–6: fr. 89–96).

choice of Plautus is perhaps indicative of his general preference for comedy over mime.

De Deo Socratis 165

The other marked comic quotation, in *Socr.* 165, is also the only direct Terentian quotation in Apuleius' works and thus, given the lack of esteem for Terence in Fronto and Gellius, extremely interesting. In discussing Socrates' *daimon*, he uses Ter. *Eun.* 454 as evidence in a grammatical discussion:

At enim Socrates non vocem sibi sed 'vocem quampiam' dixit oblatam, quo additamento profecto intellegas non usitatam vocem nec humanam significari. Quae si foret, frustra 'quaepiam', quin potius aut 'vox' aut certe 'cuiuspiam vox' diceretur, ut ait illa Terentiana meretrix: '*audire vocem visa sum modo militis*' (Socr. 165)

(But Socrates claimed that he encountered not just a voice but 'a certain kind of voice'; you may understand from this addition that no common or human voice is meant. If that were so, there would be no point in saying 'a certain kind of voice' rather than just 'a voice' or 'someone's voice'—just as even that prostitute in Terence says: '*I seemed just now to hear the soldier's voice*'.)

He contrasts the use of *vocem quampiam*¹³, which he considers as appropriate to the divine origin of Socrates' *daimon*, with *cuiuspiam vox* of a human being. As Apuleius considers it necessary to prove his argument by a comic quotation, it is quite reasonable for him to do this not in the more common way by quoting the linguistically adventurous Plautus, but by using the notably 'pure' language of Terence in a grammatical discussion.¹⁴ This time, Apuleius does not paraphrase his source; instead the quotation is correctly reproduced. Nor is it from the beginning of the play, but rather from the beginning of a scene,¹⁵ and thus probably not such a well-known phrase as the previously discussed Plautine quotation.

There must be, however, a reason for this strange clash of the Socratic *daimon* with the Terentian courtesan. This scene is the only instance in Terence where a character enters the stage from a house in response to a voice s/he has heard on the stage.¹⁶ It is preceded by a dialogue between the

¹³ This is his rendering of the Platonic τὴς φωνῆς 'some voice', cf. Beaujeu (1973: 242) ad loc.

¹⁴ Cf. Callebat (1968: 490, 493). For Terence's 'pure' language cf. Caes. *Carm.* 1.2 'puri sermonis amator' ('the lover of pure language') and Cic. *Poet.* 2.4 'quidquid come loquens atque omnia dulcia miscens' ('speaking with a certain grace and mixing sweet expressions into every utterance', both in Suet. *Poet.* 11). On Terence's language in general: Allardice (1929: *passim*); Haffter (1934: *passim*); Traina (1970: 167–79); Müller (1977); Bagardo (2001).

¹⁵ The numeration as Act III Scene ii is of course modern, but the entrance of a new character implies the start of a new scene.

¹⁶ Barsby (1999: ad loc.).

soldier Thraso and his parasite Gnatho, in which they discuss the soldier's relationship with the courtesan Thais. She, having heard them speaking outside from the backstage, comes out of her house herself with these words, announcing her reason for doing so: she has heard her Thraso's voice and accordingly comes out to talk to him. Similar phrases with the same grammatical construction can be found in Plautus, and some are spoken by less disreputable characters than a *meretrix*.¹⁷ The availability of possible alternatives, and the fact that Apuleius explicitly stresses Thais' profession as 'illa Terentiana meretrix' ('That courtesan of Terence's'; *Socr.* 165) point to a deliberate use of contrast. He shows the different uses and meanings by giving the largest possible contrast between Socrates' divine assistance and the lowest possible human character, whose profession he names unambiguously.

This example does not 'serve merely as an erudite ornament',¹⁸ but is rather integrated into Apuleius' argument. He wants to prove in this context that Socrates not only hears his *daimon*, but also sees it:¹⁹ 'quod equidem arbitror non modo auribus eum verum etiam oculis signa daemonis sui usurpasse' ('indeed, I think that he picked up the traces of his daimon not only with his ears, but also with his eyes': *Socr.* 166). In the entrance-scenes in comedy, the character coming out of his house first hears, but then invariably also sees, the person whose voice had called him out. Thais forms no exception: her speech is not yet finished when Apuleius stops quoting her. She, too, sees Thraso and welcomes him.²⁰

Thus the *daimon*, which is described in *Socr.* 165 through the splendour of the shield of Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus*, is now, in *Socr.* 166, again characterized through the same comic character, the comic soldier: Socrates can hear the *daimon*, just as Thais hears her soldier in Terence. Before, the comparison between soldier and daimon was in visual terms, the splendour of the shield. Now the sense of hearing is added. There is no extant example of a soldier being 'heard' by a character in Plautus as there is in Terence, which may be another reason for Apuleius' unusual choice of this quotation from Terence.

Apuleius, when introducing an argument about the *daimon* which is unique to him, utilizes the comic convention of first hearing and then seeing.

¹⁷ Cf. *Aul.* 811 [IUVENIS:] 'certo enim ego vocem hic loquentis modo mihi audire visu' sum', ('For I certainly seemed to have heard someone's voice just now'), *Aul.* 727, *Rud.* 259f., *Trin.* 1093. *Cist.* 543f. [MATRONA:] 'Audire vocem visa sum ante aedis modo | mei Lampadisci servi.' ('I seemed to hear the voice of my servant Lampadiscus just now in front of the house') etc.—Especially with the latter example, one finds the same grammatical construction as in *Ter. Eun.* 454 in a similar scene: the *matrona* hears somebody speaking outside her door and comes out to meet him. Cf. also Frost (1993) for a defence of Terence's use of this stage convention.

¹⁸ Thus Hunink (1998: 98).

¹⁹ On the thought itself and its lack of precedence in Plato: Beaujeu (1973: 242ff.).

²⁰ *Eun.* 455: [THAIS:] 'atque eccum. Salve, mi Thraso' ('And there he is. Welcome, Thraso').

He makes sure that his audience, whom he requires to be aware of these conventions, goes along with his argument: if Socrates, he argues implicitly, uses the same phrases that a character on stage utters when he comes out, he must mean something similar; thus he ensures that his audience is receptive to the following discussion on the visibility of Socrates' *daimonion*. This concept of seeing and hearing is also used in the *Florida*.²¹ Apuleius expects his audience to know these conventions; so he does not quote the whole phrase, which would make the connection between hearing and seeing evident. Instead, he merely implies the key phrase in this passage just as in his paraphrase of the Plautine passage in *Socr.* 145.

It should be noted that Apuleius in utilizing drama for a philosophical argument to some extent follows Plato's example. Plato uses drama to illustrate human life several times.²² Socrates, according to Stobaeus, even compared his own life to a theatre and humans to the actors.²³ Plato, too, compares philosophical discussion to the theatre (*Smp.* 194a; *Criti.* 108b), an incentive for the *philosophus Platonicus* Apuleius to use the theatre in his philosophical discussions.²⁴

At the same time, oratory also uses stage metaphors to describe rhetorical performances, and Cicero, whose influence on the *Apologia*, for example, is easily recognizable, uses dramatic images several times, in rhetoric as well as in his philosophical writings.²⁵ Whereas most references are to the higher genre of tragedy, Cicero also uses the image of comedy implicitly to compare the life of the *sapiens* with

Neque enim histrioni ut placeat peragenda fabula est, ... neque sapienti usque ad 'plaudite' veniendum est.²⁶

(Neither does the actor have to act the whole play through in order to please his audience, (...) nor do the wise have to go through with life until the 'plaudite' [i.e. the final curtain.]: Cic. *Sen.* 19.70).

For Seneca, the stage is one of his favorite metaphors for life, and he uses tragedy and comedy as well as mime, and the latter is sometimes used as a

²¹ Cf. § 3.4 below.

²² Plato *Lg.* 817b-d; *Phlb.* 50b; *Apol.* 35b; *Smp.* 194a; *Criti.* 108b; *Chrm.* 162d; *Clit.* 407a (Socrates as *deus ex machina*), cf. Kokolakis (1960: 11ff.).

²³ Cf. Stob. *Flor. Peri. Phron.* 3.85; *Peri. Aphros.* 4.61 etc.; also Xen. *Mem.* 2.2.9; cf. Kokolakis (1960: 13 n. 1).

²⁴ Aelius Aristides, a Greek Second Sophist, quotes Greek plays in his speeches for this purpose, cf. e.g. *To Plato in Defence of Oratory* 55 (where he quotes from Aeschylus, *Myrmidons* as well as from Euripides, *Hippolytos*), or *ibid.* 665 (where he alludes to Euripides and Menander), to name but a few passages.

²⁵ References: Kokolakis (1960: 28ff.).

²⁶ *Plaudite* ('give applause!') is the typical closure line (12 times) for Plautine comedy: *Amph.* 1146, *Asin.* 906, *Cur.* 729, *Epid.* 733, *Men.* 1162, *Mil.* 1437, *Persa* 858, *Poen.* 1422, *Stich.* 775, *Trin.* 1189, *Truc.* 967f.

general metaphor for drama.²⁷ Plutarch, too, embellishes his biographies by comparing the life of his subjects with tragedy (for example *Demetr.* 41.3) or comedy (for example *Luc.* 39).

The Greek Second Sophistic also uses this already common metaphor; for example Dio Chrysostomus (*orat.* 13.14) refers to Socrates as a *deus ex machina* warning mankind.²⁸ Other contemporaries of Apuleius also use it, for example Marcus Aurelius, who (for example at 6.42) considers the universe to be a comedy, or Maximus of Tyre, who dedicates a whole dissertation to the subject,²⁹ comparing the part of the philosopher with that of an actor, albeit mainly as a performer of a tragedy. The sentences found among the philosophers that seem to refer to tragedy, may, however, sometimes be taken from a comic source.³⁰

Apuleius thus joins the game of other philosophers, but he does so with a sophistic twist: he not only uses drama as the usual philosophical illustration of the metaphor or simile of the mirror of life (as for example Plato had done), but also displays the erudite knowledge of a sophist (like Aelius Aristides), by referring to specific plays with specific quotations, and in addition to that plays archaizing and verbal games. Furthermore, he manipulates his readers by challenging their knowledge of archaic literature: sometimes the unquoted context is necessary to decipher the reason for a comic quotation.

3.3. *DE MUNDO AND DE PLATONE ET EIUS DOGMATE*

Of these two philosophical works, the latter is mainly tralatitician, the former a translation.³¹ Literary decor is much more frequent in the rhetorical works, which are to be discussed later, but dramatic elements or quotations can also occasionally be traced in these two works.

²⁷ e.g. 'humanae vitae mimus, qui nobis partes, quas male agamus adsignat' ('this mime of human life, which assigns us our parts, which we act badly'; Sen. *Epist.* 80.7). As Seneca proceeds to refer to Agamemnon, *mimus* is quite likely to mean drama rather than low-life mimes.

²⁸ Cf. Epict. *Disc.* 3.22.26, again with Socrates in this role; almost proverbial use of the metaphor seems to be displayed by Aristides Dindorf 1, p. 78; Them. *Or.* 26, p. 320 Dindorf (cf. Kokolakis (1960: 44f.)). Aristid. *Or.* 11 also has recourse to this figure. The figure is introduced by reference to the quotation used in this context only, as the line spoken by the god from his machine, 'παύσασθε ὦ ἄνθρωποι' ('stop, people!') *vel sim.*

²⁹ *Diss.* 7.

³⁰ Cf. Kokolakis (1960: 51), referring to Aristides and Lucian, *Merc. Cond.* 41.

³¹ On these pieces, their genuineness, transmission, outlines etc: Harrison (2000: 174–209).

De Mundo, although a translation and thus difficult to embellish with Latin quotations, is not without them.³² It has, however, no discernible quotations from comedy; instead, tragedy dominates the quotations from the dramatic genres, although Apuleius uses archaic words otherwise only found in comedy: *Mund.* 340 *caesariatam* ('having long hair') recalls *Mil.* 768; *Mund.* 333 'quod res est' ('which is a fact') is a phrase found in *Plaut. Amph.* 569, *Men.* 1070; *Ter. Ad.* 206, *Eun.* 748 and 979.³³

Apuleius substitutes a passage from Ennius' *Thyestes* (302 Ribbeck), 'Aspice hoc sublime candens, quem invocant omnes Iovem' ('Look you on this that glows white aloft: all men call on it as "Iupiter"'), also quoted by Cicero three times in *Nat. Deor.* (2.4, 2.65, 3.10), for *Hom. Il.* 15.192 in the Greek original in *Mund.* 362f. Furthermore, he may recall *Enn. Ann.* 572 Skutsch in *Mund.* 321 *patefecerit caelum* ('opened heaven'). In *Mund.* 297f. he translates a quotation from Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* (l. 4f.) into prose, without indicating the source (which is not indicated in the original, either).

An echo of *Sen. Tro.* 545f. 'Est quidem iniustus dolor rerum aestimator' ('admittedly pain is no impartial judge of things') can be heard at *Mund.* 360: 'Nisi forte tam iniustus rerum aestimator potest esse' ('unless he cannot be such an impartial judge of things'), demonstrating that Apuleius is willing to integrate yet another rather unfashionable author (like Terence, Seneca was not regarded very highly in the Second Sophistic³⁴) into his argument. Reminiscences of Cicero (and to a lesser extent of Vergil and Lucretius) abound, however.³⁵ Apparently Apuleius considers the more serious genres better suited to the serious topic of the universe.

This evidence shows two things. First, he is able to substitute an archaizing Latin author (Ennius) for his Greek equivalent (Homer) despite crossing genre boundaries from epic into tragedy, which once more indicates that Apuleius has a good command of archaic literature. Second, it shows that the insertion of comedy into his philosophical works, when it occurs, is a deliberate decision, and not a habit found with the same persistence in all his works. When Apuleius uses comic allusion or language, he does so with a purpose.

De Platone 'offers much less than *De Mundo* in the way of literary ornament and colour'.³⁶ For example, it does not include any verse citations at all.

³² Bajoni (1991: p. xv and ad locc.).

³³ Cf. Roncaioli (1966: 340f.) on the two comic quotations in *Socr.*, p. 346 and p. 352 on the appropriateness of the simple style to the topic of *Plat.* and *Mund.*, p. 349f. on the lack of poetic quotations in *Plat.*, and p. 354ff. on the slightly more frequent literary reminiscences in *Mund.* 'Quod res est' is otherwise only found once in Cicero (*Cic. Fam.* 13.7) and twice in Fronto.

³⁴ Cf. Ch. 2.6 above.

³⁵ Harrison (2000: 184ff.).

³⁶ Harrison (2000: 203), to whom also the following examples are owed; cf. Schmutzler (1974: 40f.) on the *genus subtile* as the adequate style for this genre.

References to Plautus are of the linguistic type, for example at *Plat.* 1.11 (204) Apuleius uses the Plautine *medioximos* when describing the middle nature of the *daimones*. It is possible that his ‘quos medioximos Romani veteres appellant’ (‘which the older Roman authors call In-betweens’) recalls *Cist.* 512 ‘di deaeque, superi atque inferi et medioximi’ (‘gods and goddesses, of Heaven, of Hell, and of In-between’: together with *Cist.* 611 the only instance before Apuleius), where it again describes *daimones*, who, however, have a different character in Plautus. Word formation in *Plat.* 2.15 (240f.) may recall Plautus,³⁷ but, although the employment of *medioximus* indicates some study of Plautine comedy (in this case perhaps through grammarians’ excerpts), the number of Plautine references is small for a work of two books.

3.4. DRAMA IN THE *FLORIDA*

The uncertain decontextualized status of the *Florida* fragments enhances the difficulty of interpreting Apuleius’ statements on drama found in them. Altogether, he discusses theatricality several times and with different objectives in the twenty-three fragments. The fragments seem to derive mainly from extempore speeches, and some of the verse quotations Apuleius uses are very likely from memory. For example, he quotes Accius’ *Phoenissae* (581f. Ribbeck) at the beginning of *Flor.* 10 with a textual variant, which might derive from a conflation of the quotation with a passage in Ennius’ *Medea*.³⁸ He quotes apparently effortlessly from archaic poetry for reasons of ornament.

In *Flor.* 2 Apuleius elaborates on the pre-eminence of hearing over seeing and contrasts the attitude of Socrates, who pleads for hearing someone speak in order to ‘see’ his mind, with a quotation from Plaut. *Truc.* 489: ‘pluris est oculatus testis unus quam auriti decem’ (‘one witness with good eyes is worth more than ten witnesses with good ears’), giving the commonplace that ‘seeing is believing’,³⁹ which is spoken by a Plautine soldier. Again, a quotation of a comic soldier is used of Socrates, as in *De Deo Socratis* (cf. § 3.2 above).

³⁷ Apuleius ‘expresses Platonic doctrine in Plautine language’ (Sandy (1997: 183)), Harrison (2000: 204f.).

³⁸ Hilton (2001) in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink (2001: 127 and 150 with n. 48), and Hunink (2001: 123).—It is perhaps telling that Cicero quotes Ennius’ *Medea* (‘Medea animo aegro, amore saevo saucia’, ‘Medea, sick at heart, wounded through fierce love’) in paratragic hyperbole in *Cael.* 18, a passage also used by Apuleius in *Met.* 4.32, cf. Ch. 9 n. 29 below. On Ennianisms in Apuleius cf. Mattiacci (1986: 181ff.), on this passage as specifically Ennian cf. Calboli (1968).

³⁹ More examples: Hunink (2001: 64); Tosi (1991: 145f.).

It would be better, Apuleius thinks, to turn this notion into its opposite, into ‘*pluris est auritus testis unus quam oculati decem*’ (‘one witness with good ears is worth more than ten witnesses with good eyes’). This sophistic sleight of hand apparently ignores the completely different context of the quotation: whereas Socrates’ words are in regard of ‘*mentis acie et animi obtutu*’ (‘with the rays of the mind and the gaze of the soul’), the soldier in Plautus merely *talks* about proving his heroic deeds, which he cannot do by merely talking (and thus, according to his comic stock character, bragging) about them; his audience would have to see them in order to believe. This is exactly what the audience are unable to do, and they also do not expect this *miles gloriosus* to live up to his bragging anyway, since they never see these heroic deeds performed on stage, nor is his heroism credible.

Socrates is different; his words demand belief: as in his usage of the comic quotations in *De Deo Socratis*, Apuleius must have been aware of the context of his quotation and thus plays around with his audience’s expectation and a fundamental difference between philosophy and his own rhetorical performances on one side, and the dramatic genre on the other, although as far as he is concerned both can take place in the theatre (see below). Philosophical truthfulness is ultimately based on teaching and thus listening to a philosopher speaking to his students, whereas comic truthfulness is based on the audience watching the performance.

Apuleius is able to combine both genres, philosophy and comedy, in his own performance; he is able to teach philosophy as well as entertain his audience in the theatre, as the passage *Flor.* 5 shows, which contrasts theatre with philosophy and was probably delivered in the theatre in Carthage:

Bono enim studio in theatrum convenistis, ut qui sciatis non locum auctoritatem orationi derogare, sed cum primis hoc spectandum esse, quid in theatro deprehendas. nam si mimus est, riseris, si funerep[1]us, timueris, si comoedia est, faveris, si philosophus, didiceris.

(For you have gathered in a theatre in a good mood, since you know that the venue does not make a speech any less important; but you must keep one thing in view above all—what you will come across at the theatre. For if it is a mime, you will laugh; if it is a tightrope-walker, you will be afraid; if it is comedy, you will be in a genial frame of mind; if it is a philosopher, you will learn.)

Apuleius uses a rhetorically styled climax, to show that the best thing his audience can hear and watch in a theatre is himself, the *philosophus Platonius* teaching his audience. Comedy has the second to last position, and is not so much connected with the mimic *ridere* as with *favere*, a far more serious notion in keeping with the ancient views that comedy furthers its audience’s understanding of human nature.

In *Flor.* 18 he similarly refers to himself as a *philosophus* speaking to his audience in the theatre, where otherwise, among other things,

mimus hallucinatur, comoedus sermocinatur, tragoedus vociferatur, [...] histrio gesticulatur, ceterique omnes ludiones ostentant populo quod cuiusque artis est, sed istis omnibus supersessis nihil amplius spectari debet quam convenientium ratio et dicentis oratio.

(the mime prattle sidly, the comedian prates, the tragedian debates, [...] the pantomime deals in dactylogy, and all the other players show their tricks to the people. But these things aside, nothing else ought to be looked at more closely than the enthusiasm of the audience and the vocalism of the speaker; trans. adapted)

Again the list ends in his own performance, which, to a certain extent, subsumes all these different professions in a climax.⁴⁰

In addition, he also quotes a verse from tragedy⁴¹ and three verses from Plaut. *Truc.* 1ff. (prologue) in *Flor.* 18.7f. As he and his audience are both in the theatre in Carthage, he follows the playwright's tradition and, like a prologue speaker, asks them to imagine themselves to be somewhere else:

Quapropter, ut poetae solent hic ibidem varias civitates substituere, ut ille tragicus, qui in theatro dici facit:

‘Liber, qui augusta haec loca Cithaeronis colis’,

item ille comicus:

‘perparvam partim postulat Plautus loci
de vostris magnis atque amoenis moenibus,
Athenas quo sine architectis conferat’

Non secus et mihi liceat nullam longinquam et transmarinam civitatem hic, sed enim ipsius Carthaginis vel curiam vel bybliotheacam substituere.

(And so, just as poets fabricate various cities on stages like this, such as the tragedian who makes an actor say in the theatre, ‘Liber, you who live on these famous slopes of Cithaeron’, or similarly the comedian:

‘Plautus asks for just a tiny space
From your extensive and lovely city walls
To which, without builders, he may bring you to Athens.’

⁴⁰ Cf. the simile of the tragedy actors in *Flor.* 17.8: ‘tragoedi adeo ni cottidie proclament, claritudo arteriis obsolescit’ (‘unless tragic actors rehearse daily, their vocal chords lose their sharpness’), by which he explains his need to raise his voice in honour of Scipio Orfitus.—On the style of delivery of the *tragoedus* cf. Zucchelli (1995); Hall (2002: 34); and Tert. *Spect.* 23.4 ‘tragoedus vociferans exclamationes’.

⁴¹ Cf. *trag. incert.* 217 Ribbeck (possibly Pacuvius *Antiopa*) and Hunink (2001: 184) for possible attributions.

In the same way allow me to put before you no remote city overseas, but the senate house or the library of Carthage itself.)

Both quotations summon up locations different from the actual place the audience finds itself in, respectively Cithaeron and Athens.⁴² His audience, like those at dramatic performances, is now to imagine the *curia* and the library of Carthage while sitting in the theatre there during Apuleius' subsequent (and not at all serious) discourse about Greek philosophers such as Protagoras and Thales. Perhaps the mention of comic theatricality is to prepare his audience for hearing not a philosophical discussion on metaphysics, but a rather amusing story about Protagoras and Euathlus, which Apuleius apparently still considers as a philosophical discourse. Drama is thus used as a generic marker: what follows is instructive, yet still entertaining. Again, comedy and tragedy are the favoured genres.

Florida 16

The longest passage on comedy found in Apuleius is *Flor.* 16, a speech given on the occasion of the erection of his statue in Carthage at public expense. In an excursus to apologize for a few days' absence, he first compares his fate (he sprained his ankle and had to take a medical cure) with that of the comic playwright Philemon, who died unexpectedly before he could finish a recitation of one of his comedies.

Poeta fuit hic *Philemon*, *mediae comoediae scriptor*, *fabulas cum Menandro in scaenam dictavit* certavitque cum eo, fortasse impar, certe aemulus. namque eum etiam vicit saepenumero—pudet dicere. repperias tamen apud ipsum multos sales, argumenta lepide inflexa, adgnitus lucide explicatos, personas rebus competentes, sententias vitae congruentes, *ioca non infra soccum*, *seria non usque ad coturnum*. rarae apud illum corruptelae, tuti errores, concessi amores. nec eo minus *et leno periurus et amator fervidus et servulus callidus et amica illudens et uxor inhibens et mater indulgens et patruus obiurgator et sodalis opitulator et miles proelior, sed et parasiti edaces et parentes tenaces et meretrices procaces*. Hisce laudibus diu in arte comoedica nobilis forte *recitabat partem fabulae*, quam recens fecerat, cumque iam in *tertio actu*, quod genus in comoedia fieri amat, iucundiores adfectus moveret, imber repentino coortus ...

(This *Philemon* was a poet, a writer of Middle Comedy. He composed plays for the stage at the same time as *Menander*, and competed with him, not perhaps on the same level, but he certainly came close. He often defeated him, too, I am ashamed to say.

⁴² Mattiacci (1986: 193) notes that Apuleius continues his comic allusions at the end of *Flor.* 18 by using *atticissare*, 'to Atticize', a reminiscence of Plaut. *Men.* 11.

Nevertheless, you may discover in him many witty sayings, cleverly devised plots, recognitions clearly worked out, characters in keeping with the story, opinions appropriate to characters' ways of life, *jokes not below the belt, and weighty statements not too far above the salt* [literally: 'not below the comic sock and not above the tragic buskin'] Seductions are rare in his works, adventures are harmless, and love affairs are legitimate. Nevertheless, there is also *the lying pimp, the sighing lover, the scheming slave, the impudent girlfriend, the dominant wife, the indulgent mother, the argumentative uncle, the supportive companion, and the combative soldier, together with gluttonous parasites, parsimonious parents and libidinous whores*. Because of the good qualities he was famous for a long time for his skill in writing comedies. One day he happened to be *reciting part of a play* he had recently composed and when in the *third act* he was working up bouts of laughter, as tends to happen in comedy, a shower of rain suddenly fell . . .)

Philemon's comedies, as far as they can be reconstructed, indeed feature stock characters such as those mentioned by Apuleius, such as the *miles* (soldier),⁴³ *meretrices procaces* (impudent girlfriends) or the *mater indulgens* (indulgent mother),⁴⁴ but the *testimonium* seems to contain two major oddities, as Philemon did not write for recitals (and thus it is not very likely that he recited his comedies in the theatre rather than having them acted out), and he is not a writer of Middle Comedy, but considered as a prominent representative of New Comedy.⁴⁵ Thus Apuleius' statement has often been discredited as 'inexact and second-hand', and the most common explanation for Apuleius' 'mistake' is that he wanted to stress Menander's superiority to Philemon.⁴⁶

Middle Comedy is distinct from New Comedy, and although Plautus may have used both types of Greek comedy as bases for his comedies,⁴⁷ the description of stock characters as given by Apuleius is highly evocative of New Comedy as it was written by Philemon, and the comparison with Menander shows that Apuleius does not misdate Philemon. Why does he then classify him as a writer of Middle Comedy?

The problem as to when the tripartite division of Old, Middle, and New Comedy was invented has been heavily debated recently, mainly by two

⁴³ Cf. Plaut. *Truc.* 84, 202, 391f., 472 with Philemon's *Babylonios* (Philemo fr. 15 K.-A. vii)—Webster (1970: 142) lists stock characters of known Philemonian plays and compares them with Apuleius' description. He has reservations only about 'adgnitus lucide explicatos' ('recognitions clearly worked out', of which we have little evidence), but otherwise agrees with Apuleius' assessment.

⁴⁴ Cf. Philemo fr. 15 K.-A. vii, with Fraenkel (1922: 189ff.).

⁴⁵ K.-A. vii p. 221: 'Solus Apuleius mediae eum comoediae poetam dicit.'

⁴⁶ Thus Hunink (2001: 154, and 157ff.).

⁴⁷ Duckworth (1994: 53f.) notes that *Amphitruo* and *Persa* have been attributed to Middle Comedy originals, but not everyone agrees.

scholars, Janko and Nesselrath,⁴⁸ who attribute the invention of a tripartite scheme either to Aristotle (Janko) or Hellenistic Alexandria.⁴⁹ Discussion of the question fits, I would argue, into the atmosphere of the Second Sophistic, which seems to revive it and provides our earliest testimonies for it. The earliest mention of the word *Mese* or *media comoedia* derives from Hadrianic times: Zenob. ath. 1.42 = Euboulos 134 K.–A. defines Euboulos as a poet of Middle Comedy. Apuleius' definition of Philemon as a Middle Comedy poet is next, and then Marcus Aurelius *Eis Heauton* 11.6.5 analyses the three types of comedy as to their pedagogical value.⁵⁰

Contemporaries of Apuleius have problems with classifying other poets; Antiphanes, for example, is named as a poet of Middle Comedy by most sources,⁵¹ but Dorotheos of Ascalon (in Athen. 14.662f.) classifies him as a poet of the *neotera comoedia* ('newer comedy'; this is however not necessarily New Comedy).

Athenaeus names Alexis (8.336d) as an author of Middle Comedy. In Gellius 2.23.1 he is named in a list together with Menander, Poseidippos, and Apollodoros, who are undoubtedly authors of New Comedy, while Vitruvius 6. *praef.* 3 and Lucian *Laps.* 6 name Alexis as an author of Old Comedy. The latter passage deserves a closer look, since it also names Philemon in the same context:

Πολὺ δ' ἂν καὶ ἐν τῇ τραγωδίᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀρχαίᾳ κωμωδίᾳ εὖροις τὸ ὑγιαίνειν
 πρῶτον εὐθὺς λεγόμενον . . .
 ὁ δὲ Ἀλεξίς,
 ὃ δέσποθ', ὑγίαν', ὥς χρόνιος ἐλήλυθας·
 ὁ δὲ Ἀχαιοὺς . . .
 καὶ ὁ Φιλύμων
 αἰτῶ δ' ὑγίειαν πρῶτον, εἴτ' εὐπραξίαν,
 τρίτον δὲ χαίρειν, εἴτ' ὀφείλειν μηδενί.

(In tragedy and *Old Comedy*, too, you will often find 'Health' said immediately at the beginning. [. . .] Alexis says: 'My lord, good health, how long it is since you have been here!' And Achaios says: [. . .]. And *Philemon* says: 'at first I pray that you are healthy, then that you are doing well, thirdly that you are happy, then that you owe money to no one.)

Nesselrath notes this passage in his discussion of Alexis, but ignores it in his discussion of Philemon.⁵² These authors may use the distinction between

⁴⁸ Janko (1984: esp. 245–8), Nesselrath (1990).

⁴⁹ Nesselrath (1990: 180ff.) favours Aristophanes of Byzantium.

⁵⁰ Nesselrath (1990: 57).

⁵¹ e.g. Suda A 2735; cf. Nesselrath (1990: 59ff.) for this and the following.

⁵² Nesselrath (1990: 59 n. 76) 'Weder Alexis noch der gleich danach genannte Philemon haben mit der eigentlichen Archaia etwas zu tun' and p. 62.

'Old' and 'New' not so much as an epoch marker but as a stylistic description, and other *Mese*-authors suffer the same fate: Euboulos is usually described as an author of Middle Comedy,⁵³ but at Suda ε 3386 (fr. 1 K.-A.) he is classified as 'μεθόριος τῆς μέσης κωμωδίας καὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς' ('on the border between Middle and Old Comedy'). In Athenaeus 7.300b (fr. 34 K.-A.) he is closely linked with, but not listed under, authors of Old Comedy: 'καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἀρχαίοις κωμικοῖς, καὶ Εὐβουλος δέ...' (in a discussion on eels: 'also among the poets of Old Comedy, and Euboulos also says...').

Nikostratos is another interesting case, although admittedly there may have been several comic playwrights of the same name: Athenaeus calls him an author of Middle Comedy in 13.587d (fr. 20 K.-A.), but lists him in 15.693b together with other authors of Old Comedy (fr. 19 K.-A.).⁵⁴

This certainly points towards some confusion as to who might be presented as an author of which type of comedy, and that exactly at the time Apuleius is writing. Nesselrath (1990: 62) thus concludes that Apuleius here is not making a chronological but rather a typological-qualitative judgement about the style of Philemon, who, perhaps, in contrast to Menander looks more archaic.

Especially in the light of passage in Lucian, where Philemon is classified as 'old', Apuleius' classification is perhaps not as unusual as sometimes claimed. It seems that, far from lapsing into an error as is usually argued,⁵⁵ he may here be following a contemporary debate about the style of comedy, which classified authors not so much by the period at which they wrote, but by their particular style, a specific interest of the Second Sophistic.

Nesselrath (1990: 63f.) points out that most of our knowledge of Middle Comedy authors can be traced back to the second century, which had at least a wealth of names of poets, and perhaps even, as a character in Athenaeus 8.336d states, hundreds of whole plays. Thus it can be assumed that Apuleius not only had knowledge of Plautus and New Comedy, but may have had access also to some plays of Middle Comedy, and is far from ignorant of it.

Apuleius also seems to be quite unique in his characterization of the function of the third act as the act in which bouts of laughter are usually evoked.⁵⁶ Apart from this, *Flor.* 16 does not contain any new or stunning

⁵³ Cf. fr. 39 K.-A.

⁵⁴ Nesselrath (1990: 61f.), however, believes that Nikostratos is quoted as a 'Gegeninstanz' to the Old Comedians.

⁵⁵ Cf. Harrison (2000: 117).

⁵⁶ Like Hunink (2001: 159), I was unable to find this statement in any other ancient author.

information about Philemon or comedy in general. A list of stock characters was common knowledge for any theatre-goer in Rome or Carthage, and even the comparison of Philemon with Menander is not unique to Apuleius,⁵⁷ but it is instructive that Apuleius is thinking about comedy in terms of stock characters and plot elements. Whereas Plautus at one point links Philemon with Diphilus,⁵⁸ the competition between Menander and Philemon was widely known and discussed⁵⁹ in antiquity. Gellius, whom Apuleius probably met in Athens, and whose writings he probably was familiar with,⁶⁰ wittily comments on this rivalry:⁶¹

Menander a Philemone, nequaquam pari scriptore, in certaminibus comoe-diarum ambitu gratiaque et factionibus saepenumero vincebatur. Eum cum forte habuisset obviam: 'quaeso,' inquit 'Philemo, bona venia dic mihi, cum me vincis, non erubescis?'

(In contests in comedy Menander was often defeated by Philemon, a writer by no means his equal, owing to intrigue, favour, and partisanship. When Menander once happened to meet his rival, he said: 'Pray pardon me, Philemon, but really, don't you blush when you defeat me?')

Apuleius' *pudet dicere* ('I am ashamed to say') is reminiscent of this disparaging Gellian remark, but he could equally easily have found this comparison between the two playwrights in Quintilian,⁶² the Latin *locus classicus* for this kind of judgement on Philemon, whose lesser genius was considered to have sometimes unjustly prevailed over Menander in competition.

Interestingly Apuleius does not seem to think of a performance by Philemon, but a *recitatio* by the author, which 'seems more characteristic of Roman culture than of early Hellenistic culture (4th century BC), to which Philemon and Menander belong'.⁶³ There is however a *testimonium* on Philemon which points in the same direction: Demetr. *Eloc.* 193, unfortunately of unknown date but either very much before Apuleius' time or roughly

⁵⁷ Other sophists quoting Philemon: Harrison (2000: 117). Interestingly, a comparable phrase is used of Terence in Euanthius 5: 'illud quoque inter Terentianas virtutes mirabile, quod eius fabulae eo sunt temperamento, ut neque extumescant ad tragicam celsitudinem neque abiciantur ad mimicam utilitatem.' ('This, too, is admirable amongst Terence's characteristics, that his comedies are of that kind of temperament that they neither swell up to tragic height, nor sink down to mimic expediency.')

⁵⁸ Cf. Plaut. *Most.* 1149 (Philemo test. 20 K.-A. VII); cf. test. 33 (Synes., Dio 18, p. 278 TERZ.). Cf. Fuchs (1949: 106 with n. 5), who attributes Plautus' *Mostellaria* to Philemon's *Phasma* because of this quotation.

⁵⁹ Cf. Philemo test. 22-5 and 32 K.-A. VII.

⁶⁰ Holford-Strevens (2003: 22-6) compares *loci communes*.

⁶¹ Gell. 17.4.1 = Philemo test. 24 K.-A. VII.

⁶² Quint. 10.1.72 = Philemo test. 23 K.-A. VII.

⁶³ Hunink (1998: 100 n. 16). Cf. also Zwierlein (1966: 153f.).

contemporary,⁶⁴ states that Menander was acted, while Philemon was recited (test. 22 Philemon K.–A.): ‘Μένανδρον ὑποκρίνονται <ὄντα add. Kassel> λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις, Φιλήμονα δὲ ἀναγινώσκουσιν’ (‘Menander, who mostly omits connectives, is acted, while Philemon is read’: trans. Innes in Halliwell, Fyfe, and Innes (1995)).

While the statement in itself cannot be accepted as true (Philemon did write for performance), it perhaps shows that in later times Philemon was indeed a comic poet who was recited, whilst actual performances of Menander, as I argued above, continued. This might throw additional light on Apuleius’ description of Philemon’s recital in *Flor.* 16. Instead of indicating ignorance about Philemon, as commonly assumed, Apuleius’ statement might actually display good knowledge of contemporary practice in the different treatment of Philemon and Menander in the theatres of his time, or even of erudite scholarship on both the classification of their comic style and their performance.

In the *Florida*, Apuleius takes up the stance of being Carthage’s foremost orator, who is asked to give speeches on many concerns of the city. In addition to that, he displays himself as a true sophist, who also educates his audience through telling them interesting and educational stories, for example about Philemon’s demise. At the same time, although he sees himself as a stage up from a mime-actor, tragedian, or comedian in *Flor.* 18, he still is as much an entertainer of the Carthaginian masses as they are. The boundaries between being a rhetorician and an entertainer, between play-acting, oratory, and philosophical instruction, become blurred. By often performing his kind of oratory in a theatre, Apuleius himself becomes an entertainer like a comedian, with whom he shares the task of spreading ethical and moral knowledge.

3.5. AN APULEIAN ‘TRANSLATION’ FROM GREEK COMEDY: *ANECHOMENOS*

Apuleius occasionally goes beyond his status as *philosophus Platonicus* and *rhetor* as presented in the *Florida*. He has many other literary interests besides rhetoric and philosophical treatises, and thus self-importantly states several times in the *Florida* that he himself has written tragic and comic pieces.⁶⁵ With

⁶⁴ Demetrius’ dates range from 270 bc to the Second Sophistic; Chiron (1993: pp. xii ff.). prefers the 2nd or 1st cent. bc. Cf. Handley (2002: 165f.) on Demetrius, and 169–73 on the recital of plays as a type of performance, perhaps generally during symposia.

⁶⁵ His poetical works lost and extant, including the ‘Catullan’ epigrams in *Apol.* 6 as well as his *ludicra*, panegyric and hymns are discussed extensively by Mattiacci (1985).

one exception, no traces of his 'dramatic' production survive.⁶⁶ His references usually take the form of a generic list, without naming a title or becoming explicit about the content of his texts. His statement in *Flor.* 20.5f. remains quite vague, as the genres of his works are only referred to by their Muses, and the inclusion of the tragic and comic muses can only be inferred:

canit enim Empedocles carmina, Plato dialogos, Socrates hymnos, Epicharmus comoedias, Xenophon historias [Xeno]Crates satiras: Apuleius vester haec omnia novemque Musas pari studio colit, maiore scilicet voluntate quam facultate.

(Empedocles gives us poems; Plato, dialogues; Socrates, hymns; Epicharmus, comedies;⁶⁷ Xenophon, histories; Crates, satires: your Apuleius cultivates all of these and the nine Muses with equal zeal, but with more enthusiasm than ability.)

In *Flor.* 9.14 and 9.27f., Apuleius more explicitly lists his own works by genre, giving a comprehensive list of works in two languages; among them he includes also tragedy (*cothurno*) and comedy (*socco*), but not mime:

Plura enim mea extant in Camenis quam Hippiae in opificiis opera [...] me fateor uno chartario calamo me reficere poemata omnigenus apta virgae, lyrae, socco, cothurno, item satiras ac <g>riphos, item <h>istorias varias rerum [...] atque haec <et> alia [et] eiusdem modi tam graece quam latine, gemino voto, pari studio, simili stilo.

(For more pieces of mine inspired by the Camenae are in existence than there were products crafted by Hippias. [...] I confess that I prefer to rework, with the single reed I put to paper, poetry of all kinds suitable for epic recital or lyric performance, the comedy set or the tragic stage. Also satires and riddles, various kinds of narrative, [...] and to compose these and other works of the same kind in Greek as well as in Latin, with twin enthusiasm, equal care and similar flair.)

The inspiration single-handedly to break the convention to write works in one single genre usually imposed on an ancient author, in itself a good description of the *Metamorphoses*, may be inspired by Apuleius' reading of Plato's *Symposium*, at the end of which Socrates tries to persuade Agathon and Aristophanes that the same man should be able to write both tragedies and comedies,⁶⁸ an invitation Apuleius as a self-styled *philosophus Platonius* happily followed.

Apuleius also wrote poems in comic metres; *ludicra* fr. 1 is a trochaic septenarius, and five iambic senarii, though of uncertain authority (19a–d

⁶⁶ The iambic dimeter is popular at Apuleius' time and is also the metre of a poem Gellius mentions in 19.11 as by a friend of his who has plausibly been identified as Apuleius, cf. Holford-Strevens (2003: 148, with n. 17).

⁶⁷ Hilton (2001) in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink translated 'mimes', possibly reading *mimos*. Epicharmus is known for comedies, and for the conjecture *comoedias* which I print instead of the transmitted *modos* cf. Harrison (2000: 16 with n. 65), who also discusses further possibilities.

⁶⁸ Cf. Ch. 12.5 below.

Beaujeu), are attributable to him as fragments of his book *de proverbiiis*.⁶⁹ These pithy sayings resemble maxims found in Publilius Syrus, but also *sententiae* from Roman comedy. Fr. 19d ('pecuniam amico credens fert damnum duplex | argentum <enim> et sodalem perdidit simul', ('he who loans money to a friend bears a double loss: for he loses both the money and the friend')) recalls Plaut. *Trin.* 340 'et illud quod dat perdit et illi prodit vitam ad miseriam' ('he both loses what he gives and prolongs for him a life of misery'). Certainly Apuleius was able to write in comic metres, and thus his claim to have written comedies is at least partially credible.

An inscription from the time of Trajan or Hadrian is relevant here:⁷⁰ *CIL* IX 1164 = *ILS* 2953 = *CLE* 97 = Menander test. 69 K.–A., a funerary inscription of M. Pomponius Bassulus, a duumvir of Aeculanum:

ne more pecoris otio transfungere[r]
Menandri paucas vorti scitas fabulas
et ipsus etiam sedulo finxi novas.
id quale qualest chartis ma[n]datum diu.

(Lest I occupy all my time in leisure in the manner of beasts,
I translated a few clever comedies by Menander,
And myself even diligently composed new ones.
For whatever it is worth, it has long been consigned to papyrus.)

Bassulus thus not only translated, but also wrote comedies, although these might be for reading or for private performances, directed at members of the élite. This shows a continued interest in Menander and Latin adaptation of him during the period in question, and also that claims by Apuleius to write comedies, too, should not be rejected out of hand. Certain words of Bassulus' epitaph show the archaists' interest in Plautine word forms, for example *ipsus*, a Plautine form.⁷¹

Although the production of comedies, as we have seen in Chapter 2, is attested for the times of Apuleius, Gellius, and Fronto, there is no evidence for Apuleius' composition of any complete plays. Despite his claims, there is no

⁶⁹ On the issue of genuineness cf. Harrison (2000: 16f. and 20f.), Sallmann (1997: 298). Apuleius is capable of composing iambic senarii not only when translating comedy, cf. also the senarian oracle of the priests of the Dea Syria in *Met.* 9.9 and his poem to Calpurnianus (*Apol.* 9) in this metre. He however admits more liberties: Steinmetz (1982: 198).

⁷⁰ Cf. Cugusi (1985: 102ff.), who discusses the archaizing aspects of the epigram.

⁷¹ Of 121 instances on the PHI CD-ROM, 84 are from Plautus (e.g. Plaut. *Amph.* 415, *Bacch.* 478, *Capt.* 279 etc.), 15 from Terence. The form was analysed as comic by ancient grammarians, cf. Dosith. *Gramm.* vii 403.5 'veteres nominativum masculinum non -e dicebant, sed -us, quod etiam in comoediis veteribus invenimus' (item Char. *gramm.* p. 201, 18 ff.). On the form as Plautine (with further literature.) cf. Tietze in *ThLL* ad loc. p. 295.32–62.

trace of a Greek or Latin tragedy by Apuleius, but a fragmentary comic text in iambic senarii⁷² existed in the now lost codex Bellovacensis under Apuleius' name.⁷³ It was claimed to be an adaptation or even translation of a lost and otherwise unknown Menandrian comedy, *Ἀνεχόμενος* ('*Anechomenos*, The one who holds himself back').⁷⁴ Nothing more is known about it, but the title sounds Menandrian.⁷⁵ Courtney (1993: 398) (Apol. fr. 7) takes the *Ἀνεχόμενος* to be a character in the play rather than the title, but this distinction is not of great importance, as Menandrian comedies are often named after one character (not necessarily central to the plot) with a participle construction (for example *Perikeiromene* ('The girl who gets her hair shorn off'), *Misoumenos* ('The man she hated')). The notion of abstaining from the feeling and expression of love despite ardent feelings for a woman is not uncommon in Menander (cf. for example *Samia*, especially ll. 349ff.), although never in our extant texts is this emotion expressed in so graphic a way. This is almost certainly a rewriting or embellishment of the Menandrian original. The attribution to Apuleius is no longer doubted, as it shows Apuleius' playful use of comic elements in combination with his typically archaizing style.⁷⁶

An Apuleian adaptation of a text by Menander, a Greek comedy writer, reinforces the conclusions drawn in the previous section, namely that Apuleius, though more at home in Roman than in Greek comedy, was able to read and use both.⁷⁷

Amare liceat, si potiri non licet.

- 2 Fruantur alii; non moror, non sum invidus;
nam sese excruciat, qui beatis invidet.
- 4 Quos Venus amavit, facit amoris compotes;
nobis Cupido velle dat, posse abnegat.
- 6 Olli purpurea delibantes oscula
clemente morsu rosea labia vellicent,

⁷² The text follows the latest edition, K.-A. v1 2 431. Cf. *Anth. Lat.* 712 Riese and the texts provided by Mattiacci (1985) and Harrison (1992); for a discussion in chaste Latin cf. Baehrens (1876: 262ff.).

⁷³ Mattiacci (1985: 261 n. 97) with literature.

⁷⁴ Most recent discussion by Harrison (1992).

⁷⁵ Körte (1959), 31: 'quamquam sequentes 24 trimetros sordidissimos non esse Menandri certissimum est, tamen fieri potuit, ut poeta Latinus titulum comoediae Menandreae memoria teneret; similes tituli crebri sunt inter Menandros.' ('Although it is absolutely certain that the following 24 rather sordid trimeters are not by Menander, it still could have happened that the Latin poet remembered the title of a Menandrian comedy; similar titles are frequent amongst Menander's works'.)

⁷⁶ For the identification cf. Harrison (1992: 84), Baehrens (1876: 262), Mattiacci (1985: 263); Sallmann (1997: 298) is less decided.

⁷⁷ The text follows Courtney (1993).

- 8 candentes dentes in se effligant⁷⁸ suavio,
 malas adorent ore et ingenuas genas
 10 et pupularum nitidas geminas gemmulas.
 Quin et cum tenera membra molli lectulo
 12 complicitiora adhaerent Veneris glutino,
 libido cum lasciva instinctos suscitāt
 14 sinuare ad Veneris cursum femina feminae
 inter gannitus et subantis voculas,
 16 carpant papillas atque amplexus intiment
 arentque sulcos molles arvo Venerio
 18 thyrsumque pangant hortulo in Cupidinis,
 dent crebros ictus conivente lumine,
 20 trepidante cursu Venere et anima fessula
 eiaculent tepidum rorem niveis laticibus.
 22 Haec illi faciant, queis Venus non invidet;
 at nobis casso saltem delectamine
 24 amare liceat, si potiri non licet!

May I be allowed to love, if I am not allowed to possess!
 Others may enjoy it: I do not hinder them, I am not envious;
 For he who envies the lucky ones, tortures himself.
 To those whom Venus has loved, she grants love:
 To me Cupid gives desire, but he denies me fulfilment.
 Nibbling someone's dark-red kisses
 With soft biting let them peck rosy lips
 Let them strike gleaming teeth⁷⁹ against each other in an erotic kiss,
 cheeks let them worship with their mouth, and modest temples,
 And twinkling little twin gem eyes.
 What is more, when tender limbs on a soft bed
 Are more closely intertwined by the glue of Venus,
 When lascivious lust rouses the instincts
 To curve a woman's thighs to Venus' course
 Between loving whimperings and soft excited words
 Let them tease nipples and press embraces,
 Let them plough soft furrows on Venus' field
 And plant the thyrsus in Cupid's garden,
 Let them give frequent pushes with closing eyes;
 While Venus is still trembling from her course, and the mind is tired,
 Let them ejaculate warm dew with snowy liquid.
 This those may do whom Venus does not envy;
 But as to me, with hollow enjoyment at least,
 May I be allowed to love, if I am not allowed to possess!⁸⁰

⁷⁸ The ms reads †*effligant*†, I am printing Courtney's (1993) conjecture. This is also the case for l. 12, where I accept and translate Heraeus' conjecture instead of the transmitted †*cum pectora*†.

⁷⁹ Apuleius' predilection for *adnominatio* (e.g. 'candentes dentes, ingenuas genas') is untranslatable.

⁸⁰ My translation seems to be the first translation of this poem into English.

This poem illustrates admirably Apuleius' adaptation of Greek texts, and in many ways Apuleius does the same with *Anechomenos* as Caecilius does with Menander's *Plokion*, to Gellius' chagrin: both sentiment and language become heavily Romanized and depart from anything that could convey Menander's urbanity. The language of the first few lines is similar to passages in New and Roman Comedy. Compare, for example, Terence, *Heautontimoroumenos*, based on Menander's play of that name ('The one who torments himself') 322 'vis amare, vis potiri, vis quod des illi effici' ('You want to love her, you want to possess her, you want the means to give her presents'). Moreover, as far as Apuleius' title is concerned, the parallel to Terence's is striking.

The lexical level of the poem, especially in the more erotic sequence after the comparatively restrained introductory lines 1–5, is typical of the Second Sophistic and of Apuleius.⁸¹ The choice of words constantly evokes archaic-comic expressions,⁸² for example already in the first line, cf. Plaut. *Curc.* 170 'ipsus se excruciat qui homo quod amat videt nec potitur' ('a man who sees what he loves without possessing it, tortures himself'), cf. also *Asin.* 916. For l. 2 *frui* in this meaning cf. *Asin.* 918 'sese alternas cum illo noctes hac frui' ('to let them enjoy alternate nights with her'), *Cas.* 839 etc. In l. 3 *excruciat* is a Plautine as well as a neoteric word, cf. *Curc.* 170; *Epid.* 192; *Mil.* 719, 1068, 1280; *Rud.* 388 etc. *Vellicare* occurs in *Merc.* 408, *Most.* 834, and the image reflects *Pseud.* 67 'teneris labellis molles morsiunculae' ('the soft little bites of tender little lips'). *Gannitus* (l. 15) can be found used metaphorically, but not in an erotic context, in the comic authors.⁸³ In *Met.* 10.22 it is used in an erotic context (the love-making between the *matrona* and Lucius), and Callebat argues that this word in the *Metamorphoses* is intended to recall the context of comedy;⁸⁴ l. 16 is reminiscent of *Pseud.* 68 'papillarum horridularum oppressiunculae' ('the little squeezing of erect little nipples'), and the sexual meaning of l. 17 *arare* (to plough) appears in *Asin.* 874; *Truc.* 149f. There may also be a reference to the agricultural metaphor of the Athenian marriage formula found at the end of Greek comedies.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Mattiacci (1985: 273f.); Harrison (1992: 85–7).

⁸² The following list of Plautine expressions is also partly found in Beaujeu (1973: 169f.); Mattiacci (1985: 266f.) and Harrison (1992: 85).

⁸³ Thus Mattiacci (1985: 270 with n. 129) Plaut. *inc. fr.* 3; Ter. *Ad.* 556; *Phorm.* 1030; Afran. 283 Ribbeck; for an erotic context : Iuv. 6.64f. 'Apula gannit sicut in amplexu' 'Apula whimpers as if in the embrace of a man'.—Thanks to Ewen Bowie for reminding me of this metaphor.

⁸⁴ Cf. Callebat (1968: 404f.).

⁸⁵ Cf. e.g. *Pk.* 1013 'γνησίων παίδων ἐπ' ἀρότῳ' ('through the harvesting of legal children'), with Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 531).

Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately?), the context of this interesting piece of poetry is lost. There is a certain literary merit in the breathless grammar pulling the speaker through this inner monologue. The ring composition (that is, the repetition of the first line 'amare liceat, si potiri non licet', in the last line) makes it likely that the text, though presenting itself as a fragmentary comic text, is intended to be read as a complete poem, and it has to be analysed as such. A repetition *ipsissimis verbis* is not at all Menandrian, since Menander avoids the repetition even of single words, even when his argument follows the ring composition scheme.⁸⁶

Blänsdorf, in his discussion of Plautus,⁸⁷ points out that ring composition is recurrent and functional in Plautus in order to round off a thought. It also indicates Plautine embellishment of a Menandrian original, and at the end of the ring composition the repetition of a similar thought leads back from the Plautine addition to the initial situation of the original from where the embellishment started. None of Blänsdorf's examples, however, although they might repeat or vary the same word at beginning and end of the ring composition,⁸⁸ repeats exactly the same line which introduced the ring. Closest to exact repetition is *Pseud.* 1239 'nunc mi certum est alio pacto Pseudolo insidias dare' ('now I have decided to lie in wait for Pseudolus in another way') and *Pseud.* 1245 'nunc ibo intro, argentum promam, Pseudolo insidias dabo' ('now I will go inside, get the money, and lie in wait for Pseudolus'), which share single words.⁸⁹ Other examples of Plautine addition marked by ring-compositional repetition are given by Fraenkel:⁹⁰ for example, *Capt.* 152 and 167 are similar, and *Stich.* 417 and 435 also frame a clear Plautine addition, during which the action stagnates. Apuleius imitates the style in which Plautus emulates Menandrian sentiments. Furthermore, Apuleius turns repeatedly to Plautine phraseology, some of which is quite risqué already, but other phrases are divested of their innocent meaning and given an erotic colouring.

All in all, this repetition of a whole line is informed by neoteric poetry more than it is Plautine,⁹¹ and if the *Ἀνεχόμενος* is to be taken as a single poem rather than an excerpt, this mixing of linguistic features as well as the mixing of genres is only to be expected and could be taken as an example of Apuleius' wish to create something new instead of a simple translation.

⁸⁶ Blänsdorf (1967: 275–89, esp. 286f.; 301–4).

⁸⁷ Blänsdorf (1967: 103–44).

⁸⁸ Cf. *Bacch.* 515f. and 520; *Amph.* 116 and 119.

⁸⁹ Cf. *Mil.* 852 and 856.

⁹⁰ Fraenkel (1922: 111f.), id. (1960: 105f.).

⁹¹ Cf. Catul. 8. On Apuleius' use of neoteric discourse in the *Ἀνεχόμενος* cf. Mattiacci (1985).

This may also be the reason for Apuleius' choosing this passage before all others to adapt. The speaker of the original may be a young man in love whose pleas are not answered by his beloved.⁹² This is a typical comic situation of the *exclusus amator* ('locked-out lover'), which was taken up by Latin elegy, and thus easily lent itself to adaptation by a writer who is interested in comedy as well as neoteric literature.⁹³ An originally comic element is used in a completely different genre; drama is turned into lyric poetry in addition to being still recognizably Apuleian. This goes along well with the crossing of genres⁹⁴ much practised in the Second Sophistic.

Another remarkable feature of the *Ἀνεχόμενος* is its recurrent use of 'etymological' puns, a type of wordplay much loved by Plautus, in ll. 9, 10, 14 and 17.⁹⁵ Line 13 in its alliteration and the abstract subject *libido* might be reminiscent of the *tragicus tumor* so often associated with Roman comedy.⁹⁶ This abstract use often occurs in Plautine monologues,⁹⁷ a practice Apuleius may well be trying to imitate here.

Quite clearly Apuleius tries to imitate Plautine diction as well as structure while taking his original from Menander. He shows that he is well acquainted with archaic words, and typically Plautine puns and expressions, but he presses too many *figurae etymologicae* and a rather overdone ring composition into this small piece of comic love lyric. Thus there is not much Menandrian *ethos* or diction left, the contents are too bawdy, the words too Plautine to qualify the *Ἀνεχόμενος* for description as purely Menandrian. The choice of words, the presumed context and the technique of ring composition however emulate Plautus' methods of adaptation from the Greek (which he called 'vortere barbare', 'to turn into the barbarian language', i.e. into Latin), and, perhaps through neoteric influence, even to an exaggerated degree, that is by repeating a whole line verbatim and by framing the whole poem with it.

Mattiacci and Harrison convincingly take the first five lines to be a close adaptation of Menander by Apuleius, whereas the rest of the fragment

⁹² The problem of the speaker is touched upon by Mattiacci (1985: 264).

⁹³ Copley (1956). Examples from Roman comedy include inter alia the *paraclausithyron* in Plaut. *Curc.* 147–54 or *Men.* 698; Roman neoteric poetry includes inter alia the famous Catull. 67.

⁹⁴ 'Kreuzung der Gattungen': Kroll (1964: 202).

⁹⁵ Plautus' predilection for *figurae etymologicae* and puns: Haffter (1934: 10–43). Terence is more reluctant to use them.

⁹⁶ Cf. Gell. *NA* 2.23, 21: 'versus sunt hi Caecili trunca quaedam ex Menandro dicentis et consarcientis verba tragiici tumoris' ('these are the lines of Caecilius, in which he gives some mangled fragments from Menander, patching them with the language of tragic bombast') on Caecilius' and Menander's *Plocium*, Haffter (1934: 86ff.). Plaut. *Bacch.* 416 has *libido* ('desire') as an abstract subject.

⁹⁷ Also on the subject of love: Plaut. *Amph.* 893ff. (*amor, ira*).

constitutes 'an extension and expansion by the translator'.⁹⁸ The purpose of this theme-and-variation-game is evident: Apuleius uses a Menandrian *sententia* in order to evolve around it a typically Apuleian (and utterly un-Menandrian) grotesque and lascivious variation. Due to its precious choice of words and onomatopoeia this Apuleian poem is not without literary merit, but far from its presumed Menandrian context and sentiment.

This shows that Apuleius is able to read and enjoy Greek as well as Roman comedy, but also has a special interest in and ability to use Roman comedy, notably Plautus. He can adapt Menander to such an extent that only small remains of the original are recognizable, just as Plautus does occasionally, and he does so by employing primarily Plautine methods whilst mixing them with other genres.

Furthermore, Apuleius utilizes Plautine language in order to do this. Starting from a Menandrian sentence, he creates a poem of his own, in a tone very different from Menander's, by using so many Plautine expressions that on the morphological level it almost seems like a Plautine *cento*. He adapts Plautus' methods of adapting Menander's plays for his own purpose, and does it in a way which is deliberately recognizable as Plautine. By doing and over-doing this, however, he manages to create a literary pastiche which is highly intertextual, but still innovative. The same method, it will be argued, is employed in his adaptation of comedy in his novel.

3.6. CONCLUSION

Theatrical imagery used by a sophist declaiming in a theatre (at Carthage in the case of the *Florida*) is relatively common and can easily spring to the declaimer's mind. Not only is the environment and the audience integrated in a theatrical performance, but thereby Apuleius can also display the archaizer's predilections for Plautine vocabulary in a suitable context. Furthermore, he can draw his audience's benevolence towards himself, by suggesting the cosy feeling of belonging to the élite. Sandy⁹⁹ shows how closely linked the

⁹⁸ Harrison (1992: 89), Mattiacci (1985: 264). On the *odarium* quoted by Gellius (19.9; cf. Courtney (1993: 395f.) = Apul. fr. 6) as an extension of a Platonic two-line epigram Anth. gr. 5.78e) into 17 iambic dimeters by an οὐκ ἄμωστος *adulescens* ('a young man not without refinement') cf. also Mattiacci (1988). She stresses its affinity with the 'poesia novella' (p. 207), but refrains from an attribution of the *adespoton* poem to Apuleius (p. 208). Courtney (1993: 396) and Harrison (1992) feel surer that the *odarium* is Apuleian, and the latter uses it to argue that Apuleius is able to elaborate in his own words and style on a passage taken or translated from another poet (p. 88f.).

⁹⁹ Sandy (1997: esp. 176–232).

philosopher and the orator are in Apuleius; both elements of Apuleius' literary character derive ultimately from his sophistic role. Thus comic elements in a philosophical context that is at first sight unlikely are a sign of erudition and linguistic juggling. They are no matter for surprise, but they do display Apuleius' preference for Plautus over all other dramatic writers.

In his employment of comedy, a substantial difference between Apuleius' more rhetorical and his non-fictional works can be found. In his philosophical works, comedy is used to embellish Apuleius' discourse or to strengthen a philosophical argument as only one of many cited authorities, though in *De Deo Socratis*, his freest philosophical work, drama is used in a very sophisticated manner, exploiting omission as much as full quotation.

In the *Florida* the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction are fluid; philosophical topics are discussed in a theatre and embellished with examples and quotations from tragedy and comedy. Theatricality here is not only utilized as archaizing decor, but has a purpose of its own: it both entertains and educates the audience.

As might be expected in his other more literary works, above all the *Apologia*, Apuleius employs the same process of purposeful adaptation found in the *Florida*. In the *Anechomenos*, he shows that he can employ Plautine methods of adaptation effectively and can still manipulate them into a style which is both different from that of his models and very much his own.

Courtroom Drama: Apuleius' *Apologia*

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In the year AD 158–9¹ Apuleius had to stand trial for his life before the proconsul of Africa. His crime was to have married the wealthy widow Pudentilla who was ten, perhaps fifteen, years his senior. This was of course not an offence, so her relations who saw her money going to the comparatively poor philosopher and sophist had to think of another accusation to bring against Apuleius. They accused him of employing magical means in order to win Pudentilla's hand. This was a crime under Sulla's *lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficis*² and punishable with death. If Apuleius' opponents had succeeded in convincing the judge of his guilt, Pudentilla's relatives would have been effectively—and definitively—relieved of his troublesome presence.³

This chapter deals with Apuleius' speech in his self-defence against the accusation of using magic.⁴ His case was problematic, because it seems that Apuleius was indeed interested in magical procedures and may have been guilty of some of the 'crimes' he was accused of.⁵ His opponents, however,

¹ On the date: Guey (1951: 307–17).

² 'Cornelian law about murderers and poisoners'. For the legal proceedings involved: Hunink (1997: i.13); Norden (1912). Liebs (1996) is sceptical about Apuleius' exact knowledge of Roman law, and shows that Apuleius' conviction on the grounds brought against him could have been possible. For a different identification of the law involved in prosecuting Apuleius cf. Lamberti (2002) in Hammerstaedt, for the argument that there was no trial at all cf. Elsom (1984).

³ On the complicated interrelation between the family of Pudentilla and Aemilianus: Birley (1971: 58 with n. 1).

⁴ Since mine is a completely literary approach, I do not consider it necessary to distinguish between the speech as delivered and the speech as published. I take the speech to have been delivered at a real occasion in a real case of self-defence, but reworked afterwards for publication, against Winter's thesis (1969: 607–12) of a published literal stenograph. Sallmann (1995: 140) also considers this question as irrelevant for his literary theoretical approach; cf. also Schindel (1996) for a completely literary analysis. Compare, on Cicero, Vasaly (1993: 9); Classen (1973: 60–94) on the reality of such accusations and Cicero's response; and especially Stroh (1975: 31–54) on the futility of trawling published speeches for their 'original' version.

⁵ Cf. e.g. the remarks in Butler and Owen (1914: p. xvi).

apparently only managed to concoct an overhasty and badly prepared accusation (according to Apuleius). Thus it was much easier for him to use invective against their more ludicrous points and get the judge on to his side by ridiculing his opponents constantly. Apuleius makes his opponents look ridiculous by using many methods,⁶ and it is beyond the scope of this investigation even to summarize these traditional or innovative techniques; instead, I shall concentrate on his use of one particular aspect of rhetorical invective:⁷ drama, and especially comedy.⁸ Comedy in its origin according to Aristotle is close enough to invective and the *λαμβικὴ ἰδέα* to be used effectively in invective.⁹ This use of comedy against one's opponents is of course not unique in ancient oratory;¹⁰ it is also very powerfully employed in Cicero's *Against Piso*¹¹ and the second Philippic,¹² and both speeches are pure invectives, not speeches for the defence. Also in his oratorical theory¹³ Cicero describes the use of comedy in rhetoric but warns against the imitation of mime, which is too farcical. The most famous defence speech, however, an exemplary instance of transforming a weak case into a strong one, and turning all the blame from the accused to the accusers and their witnesses, is Cicero's *Pro Caelio* ('In Defence of Caelius'), which is unique in taking comedy as its most prominent and important foil for invective defence.¹⁴ Both speeches, that of Apuleius and that of Cicero, end with the acquittal of the accused, and more importantly, both speakers use the force of ridicule, the invective power of comic citations, to draw the judges to their side.

⁶ McCreight (1990: 36): 'He combines an inventiveness at coining new words or using familiar words in unusual ways with a firm command of the traditional transitional devices found in the rhetorical handbooks'.

⁷ Invective is an open form, which steps beyond the limits of genres: Koster (1980: 354); and 279 n. p. 1010 for further (sparse) literature on the use of comedy as invective, generally only noted in passing.

⁸ When Sallmann (1995: 143) gives a short summary of Apuleius' *narratio* ('narrative part (sc. of the speech)') and remarks 'Das hört sich an wie der Stoff zu einer Komödie oder wie ein Schwank', he seems to speak of the modern varieties of the genres, not so much of their ancient equivalents. Hunink (1998: 97–113) gives an overview of Apuleius' use of comedy outside the *Metamorphoses* but errs sometimes because he rather mechanically wants to liken stock characters described in *Flor.* 16 to the cast of the *Apologia*. For instance, his assumption that 'For the *servulus callidus* one may think of Rufinus, who controls the young lovers, or of Apuleius' slave Themison' (p. 106 with n. 29) is refuted in the course of this chapter.

⁹ 'the idea of invective', cf. Arist. *Po.* 1449a f. and Koster (1980: 8, 212).

¹⁰ e.g. the passages listed in the index of Koster (1980) s.v. 'Komödie'.

¹¹ Detailed analysis: Koster (1980: 210–81).

¹² Antonius is repeatedly characterized as the irresponsible young man of comedy, who is then interested in a *mimula*, 'a little mime actress'; cf. Koster (1980).

¹³ Cf. *De Orat.* 2.241, *Part.* 31ff.

¹⁴ May (1988: 115). On Apuleius' use of *Cael.*: McCreight (1990: 35f.), referring to Winter (1968: 5–8). Also Sallmann (1995: 148) and Harrison (2000: 45) draw comparisons with Cicero's speech, without elaborating on the specifically comic reverberations.

Recently, some Apuleian scholars have denied any substantial influence of Cicero on Apuleius, arguing that the reminiscences and verbal affinities we find in the *Apologia*¹⁵ go back to common court practice. So Hijmans and Hunink do not believe that Apuleius emulates another great speaker for the defence,¹⁶ but it will appear that there are many close reminiscences not only in the use of vocabulary, which is surprising considering the very divergent views on language these two orators have, but also in their tactics in the use of comedy.

Before the speech by Apuleius is analysed in greater detail, it is appropriate to give a short overview of Cicero's masterpiece of comic invective defence. Cicero's *Pro Caelio*¹⁷ is in defence of a young man who is most probably guilty of some of the charges brought against him.¹⁸ The timing of the accusation was against him: because of the particular nature of his crime, it could be dealt with even during public holidays, and thus the trial of Caelius took place during the *ludi Megalenses* (a festival in honour of the Great Goddess), at a time when the rest of the Roman public was involved in going to the theatre and (for example) watching comedies.¹⁹ Cicero turns this to his own advantage, draws the disgruntled judges on to his side and with his speech makes up for their loss of comic entertainment; he chooses to do this by marshalling stock characters of the comic stage before the judges, to entertain his audience as the comedians would have done.²⁰ Apuleius' use of dramatic genres is also easily conceivable: like drama, the *Apologia* was delivered in a public space in Sabratha before a large and attentive audience.²¹ Both speakers could draw on

¹⁵ e.g. the long lists compiled in Helm's edition (1910: pp. xxii–xxviii), the commentary by Butler and Owen (1914: *passim*), and Carbonero (1977: 247), not all of whose parallels between the treatment of poetry and philosophy in Cic. *Arch.* and the *Apologia* are convincing. McCreight (1990: 43) refers to the same speech without detailed analysis; Sallmann (1995: 148).

¹⁶ Cf. Hunink (1997), (1998) for his views, which build heavily on Hijmans' (1994) scepticism. Harrison (2000: 45), however, sees close links between the *Apologia* and Cicero's *Pro Caelio*, and draws comparisons between the *Apologia* and several of Cicero's speeches.

¹⁷ The speech was delivered in 56 BC; for details cf. the introduction to the edition by Austin (1960).

¹⁸ Geffcken (1973: 8); Austin (1960: 152–4) on the charges and the likely guilt of Caelius of at least some of them.

¹⁹ For the evidence of performance of comedies at the *ludi Megalenses*: Duckworth (1994: 77); Wright (1931: 1f.).

²⁰ Geffcken (1973: 10); May (1988: 105–16) gives a convenient summary of the comic elements.

²¹ The speech gives no indication as to where it was held. The theatre was not yet built at the time. It is however possible that events drawing a large audience would be held in a theatre if one was available. The infrastructure of the Sabrathan forum, at any rate, was highly developed at the time of the speech, and the speech was almost certainly delivered in the Basilica, cf. Caputo (1959: 9f.). Cf. Guey (1951: 313ff.), for the use of theatres for non-theatrical performances, which is corroborated by Apuleius' own description of the mock trial at the Risus Festival in *Met.* 3, which takes place in the theatre of Hypata. The theatrical setting of the *Florida* is also obvious in many instances.—The theatre in Sabratha at least inspired Ward (1969) to write his booklet about Apuleius' trial.

a long tradition of comparing comic acting with rhetoric, and forensic litigations are a considerable element in Graeco-Roman comedy.²²

Bergson in his influential study on 'Le rire' stresses that an individual who does not conform to society is humiliated and excluded from it by laughter,²³ and Segal²⁴ provides ample evidence that these ridiculed individuals in Plautine comedy are usually the blocking characters: pimps, misers, the braggart soldiers (*milites gloriosi*) in Terentian comedy, and, as in Caecilius', the strict fathers (*duri patres*).²⁵ Cicero's *Pro Caelio* follows the same routine for his effect. Having impersonated the roles of strict and mild fathers²⁶ from comedy (37 and 38), he proceeds to cast other participants in the trial in comic roles,²⁷ Clodia as the *meretrix procax* (the wanton courtesan) of comedy, her brother Clodius as her pimp, and himself in the role of the mild father of the *adulescentulus* (the comic young man), Caelius.²⁸ He contrives a constantly degrading portrait of Clodia throughout the speech by associating her at first ironically with characters from tragedy ('the Medea from the Palatine' *Cael.* 18). Tragedy in this speech, as later in Apuleius, is used for negative characterization of the opponents: here Clodia is linked to the mythical Medea, but already in a derisive, comicized way, since the murderous character is transferred from mythological Greece to contemporary Rome.

Then she is compared with heroines from Roman Comedy with decreasing amounts of virtue, from *matronae* (married women) to *meretrices* (courtesans), and finally with the despicable mime actress.²⁹ The part of the *meretrix*, the prostitute, is indeed Clodia's real profession, Cicero claims,

²² Geffcken (1973: 7); generally on theatre and Cicero: Wright (1931), especially pp. 61–4 for Plautus and 65–70 for Terence, Dumont (1975); generally for Cicero's use of comedy in his speeches: Hughes (1997). Quotations in Cicero: *Brut.* 290; *De Orat.* 1.129–30, 236, 251, 258–9, 2.242; cf. Austin (1960: 141–3, 173–5). Cicero refers only to four plays of Plautus (*Pseudolus*, *Truculentus*, *Aulularia*, *Trinummus*). His references to Terence and his praise for him are much more common (all plays except the *Hecyra* are quoted). In this respect Apuleius differs widely from Cicero. From the other perspective of the interface, comedy often uses forensic or rhetorical knowledge: Cf. Scafuro (1997: e.g. 7–10 for Greek, 11–14 for Roman comedy and their interaction).

²³ Bergson (1980: 146–90); esp. 148 ('The Comic in Character'); Geffcken (1973: 4).

²⁴ Segal (1987: 70–98); Geffcken (1973: 5).

²⁵ Use of Caecilius Statius in Cicero: Wright (1931: 40–3).

²⁶ All this, but especially the portrait of the *durus pater*, is done mockingly: Vasaly (1993: 175).

²⁷ Geffcken (1973: 23).

²⁸ Thus Geffcken (1973: 21).

²⁹ In section 18 she was a parody of a tragic heroine, in sections 33–6 in a series of family scenes she was a *matrona* too *familiaris* and too *molesta* to the wrong young man, in sections 64f. she is a poetess who sets in motion *fabellae* or *mimi* that have no plot, no dénouement, no dramatic truth. From the Medea to the mime is a downward leap in incongruity, and this

and by associating her with the literary figure, he manages to blacken her character by implication as well as by naming her outright as a *meretrix*, a courtesan.³⁰

Caelius, finally, is easily linked with the *adulescens amans* (the young man in love) of Roman comedy,³¹ who has fallen for a slightly older *meretrix* and has done foolish things under her instigation. Not only is a relationship with a *meretrix* condoned in comedy, it is also by definition temporary, since there can be no marriage in the end. Thus lenient fathers allow their sons to have their *meretrices*, but want them to settle down with a suitable wife and children after the affair is over. Cicero uses this concept to explain the termination of the affair between Clodia and Caelius and her desire for revenge on him.³²

It is evident that Cicero manages to convey a comic atmosphere in two very different ways. First, he directly quotes Roman comedy, seemingly in order to entertain his audience and display his literary learning. Then, when he launches into the invective proper, he exploits the comic colouring of these quotations. Having created a certain readiness in his audience to accept comedy in the proceedings of the speech, he takes the more daring step. He likens real-life people to stock characters of comedy to make them look ridiculous, and to imply that they should lose—because blocking characters in comedy always do lose³³ while the *adulescens* Caelius, he implies, should indubitably be set free.

degradation helps to put the finishing touches to Cicero's portrait of Clodia as a *meretrix*, for prostitutes frequently played in mimes and the plot and style of mimes could never be said to have enhanced the moral and social stature of female participants. (Geffcken (1973: 24)). Geffcken (1973: 24 n. 2) also refers to mime plots which contain scenes of poisoning.

³⁰ Detailed discussion, with some interesting Plautine parallels: Geffcken (1973: 30ff.) A summary of all relevant passages linking Clodia with a *meretrix*: Geffcken (1973: 34 n. 1).—Geffcken furthermore maintains (p. 39f.) that by military imagery linked with Clodia, Cicero manages to stylize her as a female *miles gloriosus* ('a braggart soldier', p. 37ff.), thus making her another blocking and unsympathetic character from comedy, e.g. in the very beginning by saying that the *adulescens* Caelius was 'oppugnari . . . opibus meretriciis' ('attacked owing to the influence of a courtesan'; *Cael.* 1), culminating in the fruitless attack in the baths, led by Clodia as an *imperatrix* ('a female commander'). Unnoticed by Geffcken is the parallel to *Truc.* 157, where the courtesan Phronesium and her servant Astaphium are called *gloriosae*, thus offering an extremely unpleasant courtesan as a point of comparison for Clodia.

³¹ Noted in passing in Geffcken (1973: 51).

³² This use of comedy to discredit his opponents is not limited to the *Pro Caelio*. Cicero seems to have followed the same tactics in his lost *In Clodium et Curionem*, cf. Geffcken (1973: 57ff.).

³³ 'In the legal drama of the *Pro Caelio*, all of the prosecuting advocates represent "blocking characters" who must be either drawn into the comic play or, more likely, since we are dealing with a real case, excluded from the festivities through victory from the defence.'—thus Geffcken (1973: 44).

Interestingly, Cicero casts the courtesan amongst the negatively portrayed characters; this is against comic tradition, but in line with the general force of a speech full of straight-laced Roman ideology. Thus two things are remarkable in the light of Apuleius' use of this strategy: firstly, the *meretrix* is here portrayed extremely negatively. Secondly, Cicero provides himself with a role to play within this 'courtroom drama': as Caelius' 'indulgent father' he implies he already has forgiven the wayward youth. Setting himself up as an identification point for the jury and the *meretrix mala* ('the wicked courtesan') as the focal point for righteous condemnation, he is at variance with the customs of comedy, but evidently succeeded with these tactics in achieving Caelius' acquittal.

Outline of the *Apologia*

In comparing Apuleius' tactics to those of Cicero, the question arises whether Apuleius follows similar techniques or is innovative in certain aspects of his invective. Language, although archaizing and sometimes comic,³⁴ may not be the prime means of giving the speech a comic flavour, especially since some of these expressions may have found their way into the *sermo cotidianus*.³⁵ It is however remarkable that whenever Apuleius derides his opponents' lack of learning by a burlesque reference to comedy, he also increases the frequency of his use of comic words. Plautus is never named or quoted directly, but his style and words are integrated into the rhetorical strategy.³⁶

Thus it may be assumed that Apuleius uses words taken from the Roman comic writers and archaisms not only for the sake of introducing a rather extravagant style into his speech, but also as potential markers for comic invective against his opponents. Apuleius, especially in the first part, manages to make his audience laugh with him and about his opponents, by using comedy.

³⁴ e.g. *occepit* ('to begin', *Apol.* 1), *denuo* ('over again, for a second time', *Apol.* 2), *quippe qui* ('inasmuch as', *Apol.* 3, cf. *Aul.* 348), *cuia* ('of whom?', *Apol.* 3, cf. *Met.* 5.15 with Zimmerman et al. (2004: 221)), the archaisms *sedulo* ('sincerely') and *ut ne* ('lest', *Apol.* 3), the ablative *impendio* ('greatly', *Ter. Eun.* 587), *multo tanta* (Plaut. *Bacch.* 310, *Rud.* 521, *Stich.* 339; for the comic nature cf. also Callebat (1968: 525)), *oppido* ('utterly', with adjectives in Terence) only in the first three chapters of the *Apologia*, before the first literary reference to Caecilius. Cf. Butler and Owen (1914: ad locc. to the quoted passages), and Callebat (1968: 519) on the comic association of *oppido*.

³⁵ Warning in Butler and Owen (1914: p. lxxv) and Callebat (1968: *passim*), (1984).

³⁶ Thus also now Deufert (2002: 205f.).

The speech's structure and argumentation fall basically into three sections, each containing three subsections.³⁷ The first main section (4–25.4) deals with the subsidiary, non-magical charges which were brought against Apuleius in order to discredit his character generally; they range from his profession as a philosopher and rhetorician to his personal hygiene. The next (25.5–65) deals with a potpourri of 'minor' magical charges, which seem indeed to link Apuleius with the practice of what antiquity would regard as 'magic', and the last main part (66–101) deals with Apuleius' alleged employment of this magic to persuade Pudentilla to marry him.

Comedy is used in all three main parts, but in different ways. In the first part it suffices for Apuleius to draw the judges and his audience on to his side by displaying his superior learning, which involves entertaining the audience with quotations and reminiscences from Roman poets in a similar manner to the use of quotations of archaic poets in his other works. Comedy is mentioned there amongst other (dramatic and non-dramatic) genres, without gaining an importance of its own. The occasional allusion to Caecilius Statius is sufficient to establish that Apuleius is versed in comedy as well as in Catullus.

The use of comedy in the second part of the speech is very different. It is no longer ornamental, showing off Apuleius' superior knowledge, but functions as part of his counter-attack. The charges against him start to get serious, and Apuleius has to switch his tactics. By having quoted enough comedy in the first part, he has alerted his audience to the fact that there might be more to come. The network of literary allusions cunningly introduced in the first part is now built on further. He exploits his audience's knowledge of comedy and its stock characters against his accusers. He effectively emulates Cicero's approach to the defence of (the equally guilty) Caelius in defending himself. Cicero had managed to make the weaker argument the better one by laughing his opponents out of court. It will be shown that Apuleius connects negative comic allusion with his opponents, whilst he avoids any extended link between himself and comedy in this part of the speech. It is only in the third main part of the speech (66–101) that he unleashes a full-blown invective against his opponents, using comedy as his central invective technique and banning any other technique of deriding his opponents firmly to the background.

In order to follow the development of his comic invective, we had best discuss the different sections of Apuleius' speech in order. This will also show that Apuleius manages to structure his speech by literary allusions and invective involving comedy and make it more easily digestible for his audience.

³⁷ Cf. Hunink (1997: i–ii *passim*); Harrison (2000: 47f. and 49f. with n. 25) on the ancient structure of a court speech; Sallmann (1995: 141–3).

4.2. *EXORDIUM* ('INTRODUCTION') 1–3

In the *exordium*, which Apuleius shapes in good Ciceronian manner,³⁸ he presents himself as the unjustly accused philosopher (a leitmotif of the speech), who has to defend his innocence against a trumped-up accusation by Sicinius Aemilianus, the main villain of the piece, who uses Apuleius' stepson Pudens as a shield behind which to hide, since the minor Pudens could not be punished if the accusation against Apuleius were judged unsubstantiated. The first time Aemilianus is mentioned, he becomes (1.1) 'senem notissimae temeritatis' ('an old man well known for his recklessness'); this reference to age and rashness is standard invective,³⁹ found already in Cicero, but it also opens the field for further characterizations of Apuleius' main opponent as a *senex*, an old man, who bears some links with comedy.⁴⁰ *Temeritas*, 'rashness' is usually the prerogative of youth,⁴¹ but it should be noted that during the whole speech Aemilianus is built up as a boorish *senex* from the countryside, (an impression enhanced by his later characterization as rustic, stupid, and old)⁴² like for example Demipho, the *senex* of Plautus' *Mercator*,⁴³ who loses his head over a woman,⁴⁴ becomes quite childish again and has to relearn how to read since love has made him very foolish and rash.⁴⁵

Aemilianus as the arch-villain of the *Apologia* is called (2.8) 'professor et machinator' ('instructor and inventor') and *auctor* ('author') of the accusation. Considering that in the further course of the speech Aemilianus is portrayed as lacking the technical expertise these words suggest, they have to

³⁸ Cf. Harrison (2000: 51) for the parallels with Cicero.

³⁹ McCreight (1990: 40f.).

⁴⁰ In his language, Apuleius manages the act of balance between Ciceronian high style rhetoric and some colloquial expressions which are also found in comedy, e.g. archaisms and colloquialisms like *medius fidius* ('so help me god', 1.3, also in e.g. Plaut. *Asin.* 23 and Cic. *Fam.* 5.21.1; S. *Rosc.* 95, three times in *De Domo oppido* ('utterly', 3.12), the diminutive *aetatulae* ('youth', 2.4; five times in Plautus), the proverbial expression *pudor veluti vestis* ('a sense of decency is like clothing', 3.3, cf. the related simile in Plaut. *Most.* 162f. that Hildebrand (1842: ad loc.) points out).

⁴¹ McCreight (1990: 41ff.).

⁴² Rusticity: 10.6; 23.5; 30.3 etc.; stupidity and lack of education: 10.8; 23.7; 30.3 etc.

⁴³ On Old men in general: Duckworth (1994: 242–9). Demipho's rusticity: Plaut. *Merc.* 65ff., his foolish behaviour: Duckworth (1994: 246).

⁴⁴ The incident of Pudentilla's letter allows Apuleius to hint darkly that Aemilianus himself had a certain interest in her.

⁴⁵ For his regression to school age *Merc.* 292ff., 303ff.—Another boorish old man of comedy is Terence's Demea (*Ad.*). For an old man in love cf. Lysidamus in Plaut. *Cas.*, the *senes* in *Bacch.*, and to a lesser extent Demaenetus in *Asin.*

be taken ironically.⁴⁶ The metaphor of *machinari* is used seven times in Plautus for the comic intrigue (for example in *Bacch.* 232); the inventor of it is usually called *auctor* (cf. for example *Mil.* 1094).⁴⁷

4.3. REFUTATION OF SUBSIDIARY, NON-MAGICAL CHARGES 4–24

The defence against the minor magical charges is conducted from a superior standpoint, that of the eloquent sophist and orator who can use his wide knowledge against his boorish⁴⁸ accusers and easily ward off their attacks. Apuleius does this by quoting a wide range of literary sources to display his vast erudition. His first example is Greek, from the *Iliad*, quoted *in extenso* in order to win over to his side the learned philosopher Maximus, who is sitting as the judge over the trial, and to some extent Apuleius' audience, too.⁴⁹ The second quotation used, however, and the first one in Latin, is derived from the comic writer Caecilius (5.3):

Sane quidem, si verum est quod Statium Caecilium in suis poematibus scripsisse dicunt, innocentiam eloquentiam esse,⁵⁰

(Indeed, if it is true what Caecilius Statius is said to have written in one of his comedies, that 'innocence is eloquence'.)

This is the only quotation of Caecilius in the extant work of Apuleius. Caecilius was in antiquity known for his gravity,⁵¹ and the *dicunt* distances Apuleius from the quotation.

⁴⁶ Cf. Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.)—Harrison (2000: 51) links the expression with Cicero's description of Chrysogonus (Cic. *S. Rosc.* 132 'omnium architectum et machinatorem', 'the architect and inventor of all things'); I take it, however, that both eventually go back to the usage of comedy, since the name of the slave in Cicero lends itself to association with Greek slave names from comedy, such as Chrysalus in *Pseudolus*.

⁴⁷ Cf. now e.g. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 252) on *Met.* 5.19.

⁴⁸ Interestingly, Appius Claudius Caecus, Clodia's ancestor, whom Cicero uses as part of his onslaught on Clodia, is also characterized as boorish (36: 'senem durum ac paene agrestem', 'a hard and almost boorish old man'), cf. Vasaly (1993: 175).

⁴⁹ *Apol.* 4.4f. from *Il.* 3.65f., a phrase also quoted by other sophists, e.g. Diog. Sinop. [Plu.]Hom., Dio.Prus., Luc./An. *Dial.*, Apollon., cf. the *testimonia* in West (1998: ad loc.) (who does not mention Apuleius). Apuleius as a learned philosopher: explicitly 5.1.

⁵⁰ Fr. 248 Ribbeck = fr. 255 Warmington, i (1961). Guardì (1973: fr. 266) does not comment on it at all.

⁵¹ Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.59.

It seems unlikely, however, that Apuleius was not familiar with the works of Caecilius, which is what Hunink and Mattiacci maintain.⁵² On the contrary, since the whole age of the Latin Second Sophistic preferred archaic to classical poets generally, there is no reason to assume that Apuleius, and possibly also the more educated members of his audience, did not know exactly what he was quoting. Gellius knows Caecilius sufficiently, and Apuleius could have known the comic poet either from direct study or from excerpts. His careful phrasing only hides a play with the quotation which is lost to us since we do not have the context any longer.⁵³

It is remarkable, too, that Apuleius starts from the same standpoint as Cicero, from the comic gravity of Caecilius. Cicero casts himself in one of Caecilius' roles, that of the *durus pater*, objecting to Caelius' lifestyle, cf. (*Cael.* 37): 'quem patrem potissimum sumam, Caecilianumne aliquem vehementem atque durum' ('which father should I best take up, one of Caecilius', vehement and harsh?') Thence Cicero will enter the more benign world of some of the more indulgent fathers of Terence, as the following quotation from Ter. *Ad.* 120f. (*Cael.* 38) shows. Apuleius, on the other hand, although he refrains from any identification, still uses the proverbial gravity and sincerity of Caecilius to strengthen his own argument about his innocence. His rare use of Caecilius here mirrors his equally rare reference to Terence in *De Deo Socratis* when he needs to find a less frivolous comic writer.⁵⁴

Comedy in quotation and reference, however, is at this stage only one among many literary references Apuleius employs in his defence. In the section about his dental hygiene, he refers to poems written by himself emulating Catullus (*Apol.* 6) and quotes common knowledge about the tooth-cleaning of crocodiles (*Apol.* 9) taken from Hdt. 2.68, Aris., *HA* 7, 612a20ff. and other zoological sources. When he has to defend his own

⁵² For the whole discussion and scepticism: Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.), Mattiacci (1986: 191): 'forse parte dell' opera di Cecilio era ormai andata perduta ed era impossibile un riferimento diretto, ma la notizia rimane ugualmente così vaga'. For Gellius' knowledge of Caecilius cf. *NA* 2.23.

⁵³ Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.) seems to have misunderstood Warmington (= Guardì fr. 250 with n. p. 194). There is no indication in Warmington that Cic. *Tusc.* 3.23.56 ('Saepe est etiam sub palliolo sordido sapientia', 'often wisdom is hidden even underneath a dirty cloak') and this Apuleian quotation come from the same passage or even the same comedy; they are simply grouped together because they share a common sentiment. It may even be possible that Apuleius is manipulating the quotation, i.e. inverting the grammar and original meaning, as he has done under similar circumstances in his philosophical works (cf. above Ch. 3.2), *Flor.* 2, and will be shown to do with an Ennian quotation shortly after this passage. This is of course speculative, but it is tempting to assume that he has twisted a rather sarcastic and utilitarian 'eloquence is innocence' into the claim that it is due to his innocence alone that his rhetoric is so brilliant. Cf. Butler and Owen's (1914) summary of Caecilius' fragments.

⁵⁴ Cf. above Ch. 3.2 on *Socr.* 165.

homoerotic poetry he quotes extensively from Solon's (*Apol.* 9.9) and Plato's elegiacs (*Apol.* 10) in addition to his own *ludicra* ('playful poems') on the subject;⁵⁵ thus it is not surprising that this passage in itself contains several references to Greek epigrams by Plato and others (*Apol.* 10.8–10),⁵⁶ all with a homoerotic context, and statements by Catullus and Hadrian (*Apol.* 11)⁵⁷ on the essential chastity of poets, who nevertheless might write lascivious verses.

Just before he finishes his section on homoerotic poetry, however, Apuleius quotes a line by Lucius Afranius, another archaic Roman writer of comedy, this time of *fabulae togatae*, after some brief allusions to the Platonic concepts of beauty and anamnesis:⁵⁸ 'ut semper, eleganter Afranius hoc scriptum relinquat: "amabit sapiens, cupient ceteri"' ('as always Afranius has left it rather elegantly in his writings: "the wise man will love, the rest will feel lust"'); trans. adapted).⁵⁹

Quintilian remarks that Afranius was known for his interest in boys: 'utinam non inquinasset argumenta puerorum foedis amoribus mores suos fassus' ('If only he had not defiled his plots with loathsome love affairs with boys, professing his own inclinations!').⁶⁰ There are, however, no clear pederastic references in his extant fragments, and perhaps Quintilian is exaggerating his claim, basing it on one or two comedies of Afranius. It is generally accepted that Apuleius assumes his audience knows that Afranius showed this predilection though he cannot himself offer a matching quotation. It suffices for him to flatter their supposed learning by alluding to this author's life and works and to quote a phrase which on the surface corroborates his Platonic approach to the issue. Although traces of homoerotic poetry are found in archaic Roman poetry and are alluded to by Apuleius,⁶¹ to quote Afranius is more suitably archaic and flattering to his audience's capacity to catch allusions.⁶²

⁵⁵ His own poems quoted in Ch. 9 contain many Plautine words and turn of phrases, which makes the identification of the writer of the *Anechomenos* with Apuleius much more likely. Commentary on the *ludicra*: Courtney (1993: 392ff.); Harrison (2000: 16–20).

⁵⁶ The name Alexis occurs in *Apol.* 10.9, an epigram by Plato (*AP* 7.100, no. 6 Page). Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.) mentions the author of Greek comedy by that name, but has to admit that the name occurs in epigrams and bucolic poetry, too. I cannot take its presence here as relevant to the use of comedy in the *Apology* at all.

⁵⁷ Catull. 16.5f.; Hadrian fr. 2 Courtney (1993).

⁵⁸ Hunink (1997: ii. on 12.5 with further references). Cf. Trapp (1990) on the Second Sophistic's knowledge of Plato's *Phaedrus*.

⁵⁹ Fr. 221 Ribbeck = 225 Daviault (1981).—The passage (the only quotation from this author in Apuleius) is apparently a well-known *sententia*, also quoted in Nonius 421.19 (as deriving from *Omen*) and Serv. *Aen.* 4.194 (as deriving from *Cinerarius*). On the high praise for Afranius displayed in the term *eleganter* cf. Marache (1952: 329).

⁶⁰ Quint. 10.1.100, cf. Hunink (1997: ii. 56 with the references).

⁶¹ Q. Lutatius Catulus' homoerotic poetry is discussed in Courtney (1993: 70f., 75ff.).

⁶² Cicero uses Afranius, too, but only just: Wright (1931: 39).

The triad of allusions to early Roman drama, crossing three available subgenres, concludes with a reference to the tragedian Ennius⁶³ (*Apol.* 13.1), loosely linking philosophy with tragedy:

Da igitur veniam Platoni philosopho versuum eius de amore, ne ego necesse habeam contra sententiam Neoptolemi Enniani *pluribus* philosophari.

(So please forgive Plato the philosopher for his love poems! Otherwise I will need to act against the opinion of Neoptolemus in Ennius and ‘philosophize *at length*’.)

In its full form the line runs. ‘philosophari mihi necesse, *paucis*, nam omnino haud placet’ (‘I must needs be a philosopher—in a few things; for to be so in all ways—that displeases me’).⁶⁴ This apparently well-known line is quoted three times by Cicero in a philosophical context and Gellius,⁶⁵ and Apuleius seems to expect his audience to know either its original context in the tragedy⁶⁶ or its use in the arguments of the philosopher Cicero, since Apuleius alludes to the line and rephrases it by the substitution of *paucis* (‘in a few words’) for *pluribus* (‘at length’), and perhaps even changes the meaning by manipulating his audience into taking *paucis* in the original quotation to refer to the number of *words* used. Thus Apuleius invites the learned members of his audience, especially the presiding judge, who probably also knows Cicero’s and Gellius’ references to this particular phrase, to join him again in his witty derision of his boorish accusers. He uses a similar strategy in *Flor.* 2.⁶⁷

The next passage among the subsidiary charges is concerned with Apuleius’ possession of mirrors (13–16). In a sophistic argument Apuleius suggests that owning a mirror does not imply using it, and the example with which he illustrates this is taken from drama again (*Apol.* 13.7):

Si choragium thymelicum possiderem, num ex eo argumentarere etiam uti me consuesse tragoedi[i] symmate, histrionis crocota, † orgia, mimi centunculo? Non opinor. Nam et contra plurimis rebus possessu careo, usu fruor.⁶⁸

(Look, if I possessed an actor’s equipment, would you argue that I was regularly wearing the long cloak of tragedy, the saffron-coloured dress of the stage, or the

⁶³ Apuleius’ predilection for Ennius: Mattiacci (1986: 181f.).

⁶⁴ 95 Jocelyn = *Ex. Fab. Inc.* 400 Warmington (1961; who also lists the other occurrences of the fragment.

⁶⁵ *Cic. Tusc.* 2.1, *De Orat.* 2.156, *Rep.* 1.30; *Gell.* 5.16.5, 5.15.9. The latter passage gives the full quotation and is especially remarkable since Gellius points out that he is in full agreement with Neoptolemus (*probabamus*). Apuleius in effect shares this preference. Cicero has old-fashioned Romans quote this remark (Antonius, the grandfather of the triumvir, in *De Orat.*, Aelius Sextus in *Rep.*), and uses it as an introduction to the long philosophical treatise *Tusc.* 2 (Wright (1931: 52).

⁶⁶ Unfortunately the context is lost to us, and it is uncertain from which tragedy this line derives, cf. Vahlen, Jocelyn, and Warmington (1961) ad loc.

⁶⁷ Cf. Ch. 3.4 above.

⁶⁸ For a discussion of the textual difficulties: Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.).

patchwork robe of mime? I do not think so. On the other hand there are many things I do not possess, but use none the less.)

The first phrase, describing theatrical equipment,⁶⁹ is split up into the three main dramatic genres on the Roman stage, the costume of the tragic, comic and mime actors, with a possible fourth element missing between comedy and mime. Its use may soften us up for further dramatic reference. At the end of his mirror argument, Apuleius closely associates by implication his opponent Aemilianus with exactly the theatrical equipment the possession of which is so negatively charged (*Apol.* 16.7):

Terrimum [*sic*] os tuum minimum a Thyesta tragico demutet, tamen profecto discendi cupidine speculum inviseres et aliquando relicto aratro mirarere tot in facie tua sulcos rugarum.

(although your hideous face differs only a little from the mask of tragic Thyestes, curiosity would certainly have made you look into a mirror. Yes, finally you would have left your plough and wondered about all those furrows in your face.)

Whilst Apuleius in 13.7 does not usually (*consuesse*) wear any dramatic equipment, it is his opponent who wears his tragic mask on a permanent basis. Again, drama is used to illustrate, here even visualize, Apuleius' supposed innocence. The by now familiar invective against Aemilianus' age and boorishness is put to good use here, as Apuleius suggests that Aemilianus should take up a mirror to recognize his own character, that is, that he should make good use of a commodity that he himself has accused Apuleius of possessing, to take a good look at his own dramatic equipment.⁷⁰ This 'throwing back' of the argument into the face of his opponent is also done by the association of the tragic mask of Thyestes⁷¹ with the ugly and wrinkled Aemilianus. Like Cicero in *Pro Caelio*, Apuleius here refers to tragedy, but only to alienate the associated character (Clodia and Medea in Cicero, Aemilianus and Thyestes in Apuleius) from the audience's sympathies, and to prepare the audience for more daring dramatic identifications to come.

The fifth subsidiary charge against Apuleius is his poverty and his lack of slaves, which his opponents of course exploited in order to prove his need for a rich marriage. Apuleius turns this argument into a defence of the conventionally poor philosopher against mistrust, and inserts rhetorical set-pieces

⁶⁹ Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.) translates 'equipment of an actor' with reference to Leppin (1992: 79f.), who first finds this meaning of the word in Plutarch (*Sulla* 36.1f.).

⁷⁰ Hunink (1997: ii.60 on 15.4) points out that in comedy mirrors often play a role as 'revealers of truth', e.g. Plaut. *Epid.* 387ff.; Ter. *Ad.* 415; cf. Geffcken (1973: 81f.).

⁷¹ Ennius' *Thyestes* is quoted frequently by Cicero, although he does not approve of its philosophy or language: Wright (1931: 51f.) Cicero e.g. uses the curse of Atreus against Piso, for whom Thyestes' fate would have been equally appropriate (*Pis.* 43).

such as the 'Praise of Poverty', the *laus paupertatis*. He claims to have inherited some money from his father, and to have spent it on honourable causes like education and his friends. As he arrived in Oea, a foreign town, all alone except for a single slave, it would have been possible for him to conjure up comic references about a young man with only one slave arriving in a strange city, such as Menaechmus II in Plautus' *Menaechmi*.⁷² Apuleius however refrains from any identification of himself with the stock comedy type of the young man in love, as he had also in the last section dissociated himself from any stage costume. Although this young man is generally a sympathetic character,⁷³ he often squanders his father's inheritance on a courtesan or other irresponsible activities. Apuleius is careful not to be associated with this lifestyle, since he wants to avoid any allegation that he wished to marry Pudentilla, a *mulier dotata* (a richly dowered woman), only for her money, as is sometimes done by men in comedy.⁷⁴ He is careful to avoid any association of himself with drama at all, as will be seen more clearly later, and his usual closural invective against Aemilianus this time (23.7) likens his opponent to Vergil's Charon, an epic character as well as a dramatic one: *Apol.* 23.7: 'unde tibi potius quam ob istam teterrimam faciem Charon nomen est'⁷⁵ ('This circumstance, rather than your hideous face, has earned you the nickname of "Charon"').

The last subsidiary charge brought against Apuleius is his native region, since he comes from Madauros, from between Numidia and Gaetulia.⁷⁶ Both this invective against one's place of birth and Apuleius' counter-attack, setting it off against Aemilianus' even more barbarian birthplace Zarath, is conventional.⁷⁷ Conventional also is the assertion that even the clever Athenians have the proverbially dumb Meletides as a countryman: 'apud Athenienses catos Meletides fatuus' ('the foolish Meletides among the clever Athenians'; *Apol.* 24). This Meletides, proverbial for his stupidity, occurs in Athenian comedy,

⁷² This is also in the background of *Bacchides* and *Hecyra*.

⁷³ Duckworth (1994: 237).

⁷⁴ Cf. *Aulularia*, *Menaechmi*.

⁷⁵ Charon: Verg. *Aen.* 6.299 is likely to be the most immediate foil here, given the references to Mezentius later in *Apol.* 63 and 98. However, he too is a prominent figure in drama, remarkable for his ugliness, which is one of the leitmotifs for Aemilianus throughout the whole speech. Dramatic occurrences of Charon: E. *HF* 32; *Alk.* 255, 361; Ar. *Ra.* 182, *Lys.* 606, *Pl.* 278; Antiphanes b. Stob. *Flor.* 121.4; Sen. *HF* 64ff. and often in Lucian.—Cf. Schwartz in *RE* (5. *Halbband* 1897) and Roscher (1884–1937) s.v. 'Charon'; Abt (1908: 28f.).

⁷⁶ Discussion of the social status of the cities in North Africa in relation to each other: Thompson (1977–8: 5f.): Oea and Madauros were *coloniae*, Zarath just a village.

⁷⁷ Cf. Hunink (1997: ii. 81); Koster (1980: 2) lists several common *topoi* of invective. Apuleius uses nos. 2 (non-Greek origin), 5 (culpable sexual behaviour), 8 (unusual appearance) and 10 (bankruptcy) against his opponents. Koster (1980: 62–71) gives evidence for the use of invective in tragedy, and pp. 72–6 in (Greek Old) Comedy. For boorish origins as a matter for accusation cf. Opelt (1965: 149f.).

such as Aristophanes' *Frogs* and Menander's *Aspis*, as Hunink notes,⁷⁸ but not only there.

The first section contains many elements which are quite alien to a forensic speech, but which might well have been included in Apuleius' declamatory *Florida* speeches. Comedy is only one of many displays of erudition. Towards its end, Apuleius has managed to show his learning by quoting, among other genres, different manifestations of Roman drama, that is the *fabula palliata* (comedy with Greek content), the *fabula togata*, and tragedy in a speech which is supposed to be a self-defence against the accusation of magic.

By showing his own wide reading and claiming that he is on trial because he is a philosopher and thus far more erudite than his boorish opponents, he wants to draw the educated judge onto his side. Drama, however, is only one of the many genres used. Whenever Apuleius employs it, he does so with a particular purpose, but he has similar purposes in quoting Catullus or zoological treatises. Even when he refers to the dramatic genres by quoting tragedy and comedy, he firmly disassociates himself from comedy, although, as seen in the Ennius example, he links the philosopher (and by implication himself) with the tragedian. This strategy changes only slightly in the next section.

4.4. REFUTATION OF 'MINOR' MAGICAL CHARGES 25.5–65

With a rhetorical division, in which he separates out his several arguments, Apuleius launches into the second main section, the discussion of the 'minor' magical charges he is accused of, some of which seem strange to our modern eyes, like the buying of fish. This is, however, not as harmless as Apuleius portrays it, since different fish were indeed used in love magic.⁷⁹

Already in the division (25–8) Apuleius manages to make the fish argument look ridiculous, by using comedy as a reference. In 27.12, when he sums up the charges against him with 'Hiscine argumentis magian probatis, casu puerili et matrimonio mulieris et *obsonio piscium*?' ('Is this the sort of

⁷⁸ Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.) refers to Ar. *Ra.* 990f.: 'κεχρηότες μαμμάκθυοι, | Μελιτίδαι καθήντο' ('with open mouths and dull-brained, they would sit like Meletides') and Men. *Aspis* 269f. 'Μελετίδῃ | λαλεῖν ὑπέιληφας' ('Do you think you are talking to Meletides?'); Apuleius at least takes it as a proper name for a halfwit, cf. Dover (1993: 316). This, however, need not be a reference to comedy, since Meletides also occurs in rhetoric and other literature in the same function, i.e. as a stupid man born in a city of intelligent philosophers (e.g. Ael. *VH* 13.15.6, Eust. *Od.* 395.21 and 2.42). Aelian did know comedy quite well, as his letters show, but even so the reference to comedy is not clear at this point in Apuleius' speech.

⁷⁹ Examples and rather interesting recipes for love spells in Abt (1908: 67–70), Faraone (1999: 66; 121f. and *passim*) for the universal employment of sympathetic magic.

argument you prove magic with: the fall of a boy, the marriage of a woman, the buying of fish?') he uses a word, as Hildebrand (1842: ad loc.) observes, which is used only for purchasing food, making the purchase of fish look extremely harmless, since fish bought for food is not used for magic purposes. One could add that this is the usual word for buying the typical comedy food for the typical comic dinner.⁸⁰ Comic fish-buying is put into the mouth of the opponent (cf. *probat*is), ensuring that the accusation looks trumped-up and ridiculous.⁸¹

It is also telling that the second point, the marriage with Pudentilla, receives some comic colouring, but seen through the eyes of the old Aemilianus: 'Quod quidem matrimonium nostrum Aemiliano huic immane quanto angori quantaque dividiae fuit' ('but this marriage of ours has brought Aemilianus here an awful lot of anguish and vexation'; *Apol.* 28.6) recalls similar passages from Plautus.⁸²

The argument about the fish takes up a tenth of the whole speech. Apuleius' opponents surely suggested that he bought these fish in order to perform some magic ritual, that is, to use them for love-magic, which Apuleius flatly denies.

At first he argues that buying fish is an everyday business, and he creates a slightly comic atmosphere in his argument. He lists other food he could have bought (29.5f.):

Nam saepe numero *et vinum et holus et pomum et panem* pretio mutavi. Eo pacto *cuppedinariis* omnibus famem decernis: quis enim ab illis *obsonare* audebit, si quidem statuitur omnia edulia quae depenso para<n>tur non cenae, sed magiae desiderari? (For I have often obtained *wine, vegetables, fruit, and bread* in exchange for money! This way you condemn all *grocers* to hunger. For who will dare to *buy* from them once it has been established that all eatables acquired for payment are not served at dinner but serve magical purposes?)

The list of four edible things is not in itself a comic food catalogue,⁸³ since this is not the food provided for a comic dinner, but it is reinforced by a list of luxurious food added shortly afterwards in 30.1: 'lepores quaererem vel apros vel altilia' ('I sought to acquire hares, boars, or fattened fowls'). Together with the Plautine alliteration⁸⁴ and two definitely comic words within two

⁸⁰ *Obsono* ('to go shopping'): only used in Cato (*Orat.* 133; *obsonito* in *Orat.* 139, prompts Festus *verb.* 201 to comment on it) and Plautus, besides Apuleius. Noun derivatives are common to more authors.

⁸¹ For the comicality of fish-buying cf. the discussion in Ch. 7.2 below.

⁸² Cf. e.g. Plaut. *Stich.* 19; *dividia* ('vexation') is a revived archaism, cf. also Petersmann (1973: ad loc.).

⁸³ Food catalogues in general and in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*: May (1998: *passim*).

⁸⁴ Fraenkel (1922: 275 n. 1.) Cf. also the linguistic discussion in id. (1960: 391ff.).

sentences (*obsonare* ('to purchase provisions') and *cuppedinariis* ('sellers of delicacies'⁸⁵)), the first list creates a comic environment upon which Apuleius can elaborate in the beginning of the section. Anyone who buys fish, he argues, does so for provender, not for magic. Its strategy resembles that of the mirror argument: he begins a section of his defence by saying that he has indeed done the act that he is accused of (i.e. he does own a mirror or buy fish), but then proceeds to argue that this is absolutely harmless (i.e. he does not use the mirror, or fish, for magical purposes⁸⁶). Instead, he has his own, philosophical or oratorical, purpose for it, that is, he uses the mirror to practise oratory with it just like Demosthenes, and he cuts up fish to study their zoological features just like Aristotle. Indeed, as soon as he launches into his scientific excuse for dealing with fish, he leaves fish in comedy right behind.⁸⁷ He quotes Vergil⁸⁸ for love-magic not involving fish, and says he could cite other examples of love-magic in Greek comedies and tragedies which do not mention fish either:⁸⁹

Memorassem tibi etiam Theocriti paria et alia Homeri et Orphei plurima, et ex comoediis et tragoediis Graecis et ex historiis multa repetissem, ni te dudum anim-advertissem Graecam Pudentillae epistulam legere nequivisse.

(I would have referred to similar places in Theocritus, others in Homer, and many more in Orpheus, and I would have drawn many parallels from Greek comedy and tragedy as well as from historiography, if I had not noticed long before that you were not able to read a Greek letter of Pudentilla's; *Apol.* 30.11)

He claims that he refrains from doing so under the pretext that his opponent Aemilianus is too illiterate to understand Greek (a point which will not keep

⁸⁵ Ter. *Eun.* 256: 'concurrunt mihi obviam cuppedinarii omnes' ('all sellers of delicacies came running towards me'); cf. *cuppedia* and *cuppedo* at Plaut. *Stich.* 714, Apul. *Met.* 1.24. For *obsonare* and the general comicality of the scene cf. Callebat (1968: 484).

⁸⁶ Cf. *Apol.* 32 for the argument that owning something potentially dangerous does not equal using it for a sinister purpose.

⁸⁷ Hunink (1997: ii. 106 on 32.1 *Salacia*) refers to Mattiacci (1994: 67 with n. 52), who sees a link with Pacuvius here (Pacuv. *trag.* 418 Ribbeck, but this is a misleading reference. A search of the PHI CD-ROM gives eighteen instances of *Salacia*'s name, e.g. in Cic. *Tim.* 39.3 or Gell. *NA.* 13.23: this passage makes it evident that *Salacia* is an archaic Latin name for a sea-goddess; Apuleius may just have been interested in both her Latinity and her age.

⁸⁸ Verg. *Ecl.* 8.64f. in *Apol.* 30.6f. and *Aen.* 4.513–6 in 30.8.

⁸⁹ *Apol.* 30.11. Cf. Abt (1908: 95–9) for examples of magic in Greek drama, and generally for Apuleius' wide knowledge of magic in the *Apologia*. Magic in general cf. Faraone and Obbink (1991); Graf (1997: esp. 65–88); love-magic in particular: Faraone (1999), magic in the 2nd cent. AD: Annequin (1973: 106–16) on the *Apologia*. Cf. Dickie (2001: 147ff.) for Apuleius' trial and the underlying law.—Whereas Annequin tries to find parallels between the philosopher and the magician (p. 15), Graf is surely right in seeing this relationship as a dichotomy, at least in Apuleius' eyes.

him from quoting Homer in the original⁹⁰ in the very next chapter, and on precisely the same subject), and then cites Laevius⁹¹ as a specifically Latin example for this kind of non-fishy love-magic in comedy and as another link with the élite who read this archaic Latin author:

Igitur unum etiam poetam Latinum attingam, versus ipsos, quos agnoscent qui Laevium legere:

Philtra omnia undique eruunt:
Antipathes illud quaeritur,
Trochiscili, ung<u>es, taeniae,
Radiculae, herbae, surculi,
Saurae inlices bicodulae,
Hinnientium dulcedines.

(So I will just touch upon one more Latin poet. Those who have read Laevius will recognize his lines:

Philtres are brought out from everywhere:
they look for love-charms, magic wheels and nails,
ribbons, rootlets, herbs and twigs,
enticing lizards with two-forked tails⁹²
and then the neighing animal's *hippomanes*.)

Apuleius refers to comedy by quotation or allusion for the last time in this section at 30.11, although he keeps up a light-hearted tone in what follows. He sums up the food argument by the 'naive' statement (31.1) 'Enimvero piscis ad quam rem facit captus nisi ad epulas coctus?' ('really, what is the use of a fish that is caught, except to be cooked for dinner?'). This is the last we hear about fish as food; then he leaves the sphere of food-buying, and turns to philosophy.

After a short anecdote about his fellow philosopher Pythagoras who also buys fish,⁹³ but for a non-magical and non-dietary purpose, and some references to Homer, he goes into detail about the fish he is accused of dealing with. The list of fish is headed by 'piscis [. . .] quem mihi Themis[c]on servus noster medicinae non ignarus, ut ex ipso audisti, ultro attulit ad inspiciendum' ('My slave Themison, who is not unpractised in medicine (as you have

⁹⁰ *Il.* 11.741 and *Od.* 4.229f.

⁹¹ Laevius' fragments (this is fr. 27): Courtney (1993: 118–43). There may be another hidden allusion to Laevius in *Met.* 9.21, cf. Mattiacci (1986: 178).

⁹² Hunink (2001) leaves this line untranslated, I offer my own version.

⁹³ *Apol.* 31.2f.: Pythagoras of course buys the fish and has them released because of his belief in *metempsychosis*, which Apuleius does not mention. Cf. Hunink (1997: ii.104) for Apuleius' manipulation of the anecdote, and n. 102 for a link with Ennius.

heard from the man himself), brought the fish to me on his own initiative'; *Apol.* 33.3). Apuleius does not elaborate this, but he makes no claim that it is bought as food—the *lepus marinus* or sea-hare is well known as a poisonous dish⁹⁴—nor does he make anything of the fact that his own slave provided him with it (the verb is neutral: *attulit*, 'he brought'). Apuleius remains remarkably reticent here, with no verbal or structural allusion to the potential comic situation. Fish-shopping is a common activity for slaves in Roman comedy, and even the catching of a fish could be linked to comedy (for example Plautus' *Rudens*).⁹⁵ References to fish-shopping also occur in the 'lesser' genre mime.⁹⁶ Reference to comedy or mime would easily have been possible by verbal allusion, but neither he himself nor his slave is associated with comic action. Furthermore, he does give some fish catalogues later on, both in Greek and in Latin, but none of them is taken from the plentiful resource of Greek comedy, despite the vast availability of fish catalogues especially in Greek Middle Comedy, and the link between philosophy and fish offered by Terence (*Ad.* 373–81).

Apol. 35.3 and 4 feature comic-sounding catalogues; yet Apuleius does not pronounce them *in propria persona*, for they are put into the mouth of his opponents:

Quin ergo dicitis me [...] quaesisse de litore conchlam striatam testam habentem, calculum teretem, praeterea cancrorum furcas, echin<or>um caliculos, lolliginum ligulas, postremo assulas, festucas, resticulas et ostrea Pergami vermiculata, denique muscum et algam, cetera maris eiectamenta.

(*So why not say that at the same time I hired a large number of fishermen to search the coast for grooved shells, blunt-edged scales, and smooth pebbles? And further for crab-claws, sea-urchin suckers, and squid tentacles? And finally for splinters, stalks, cords, molluscs with wavy lines, or even moss and seaweed and other waste of the sea.*)

Similarly, in the earlier discussion about Virgil's references to love-magic, it is his opponent, not himself, Apuleius insists, who talks about the magic purposes of fish, in a passage full of comic language⁹⁷ (*Apol.* 30.10):

⁹⁴ Greek *τρυγών*; cf. Plin. *Nat.* 9.155, 20.223, 32.8.9.—Philostratus even reports that Titus was killed by Domitian with a dish prepared from *lepus marinus*, a tactic also employed by Nero (Philostr. *Apol. Tyan.* 6.32); cf. Graf (1997: 73 with n. 20).

⁹⁵ The slave Gripus boasts about catching an extraordinary fish (*Rud.* 906–37). Shopping expeditions by slaves to obtain fish (sometimes abortive) occur in Plautus' *Casina*, *Menaechmi*, *Miles*, *Mostellaria*, *Stichus*, in Terence's *Andria* and *Adelphoe*.

⁹⁶ Cf. e.g. Laberius' *Piscator*, and the reference to fish in his mimes (cf. Plin. *NH* 9.61; J. Lydus, *De Magistr.* 3.61 = p. 154.13 Wünsch; thanks to Costas Panayotakis for pointing these parallels out to me).

⁹⁷ On the comic flavour of the passage cf. Hunink (1997: i. 101f.).

Postremo in maleficio ille [sc. Virgilius] venenum nominat, tu [sc. Tannonius Pudens] pulmentum, ille herbas et surculos, tu squamas et ossa, ille pratum decerpit, tu fluctum scrutaris.

(Finally, for black magic he [i.e. Vergil] names poison, you [i.e. Tannonius Pudens] a piece of fish, he mentions herbs and twigs, you scales and bones, he plucks in the field, you explore the deep.)

Apuleius wants to avoid being associated with the men who order fish to be bought in comedy, often enough the *adulescentes amantes*, who need extravagant food for a dinner with a courtesan, who irresponsibly squander their inheritance on a girl and extremely expensive fish dishes, who are ‘gulones omnes, qui inpendio a piscatoribus merguntur’⁹⁸ (‘all gourmands, who are sunk by the prices they pay to fishermen’; *Apol.* 32.6).

Instead, Apuleius casts himself in two completely different roles, first in that of the philosopher and follower of Aristotle interested in natural science (*Apol.* 36.3):

Legat [sc. the opposition] veterum *philosophorum* monumenta, tandem ut intellegat non *me* primum haec requisisse, sed iam pridem *maiores meos*, Aristotelen dico et Theop<h>rastum et [t]Eudemum et Lyconem ceterosque Platonis minores, qui plurimos libros de genito animalium deque victu deque particulis deque omni differentia reliquerunt.

(Let him read the monumental works of *ancient philosophers*, so that he finally understands that *I* am not the first one to have looked for these things. For a long time *my masters* have done so—I mean Aristotle, Theophrastus, Eudemus, Lyco, and the other successor Platonists, who have left on record many books on the origin of animals, their diet, anatomy, and differentiating characteristics.)

To prove his philosophical involvement, he sends off one of his attendants to get the book he has written about *Naturales Quaestiones*.⁹⁹ In the meantime, he proclaims, he will entertain his audience with a story about Sophocles. This well-known anecdote supplies not only a moment of rest for his audience, as scholars have pointed out, but also offers the second model for Apuleius to identify himself with, a great tragedian, who like Apuleius himself is falsely accused by a relative and defends himself by reading from his own work—the fact that Sophocles was acquitted is clearly to influence the judge on Apuleius’ behalf, too (*Apol.* 37):

Sophocles poeta Euripidi aemulus et superstes—vixit enim ad extremam senectam—, cum igitur accusaretur a filio suomet dementiae, quasi iam per aetatem desiperet, protulisse dicitur Coloneum suam, peregre regiam tragoediarum, quam forte tum in eo

⁹⁸ I follow Hunink (1997: i) for his defence of the MSS reading *merguntur* instead of Helm (1910)’s *mercantur*.

⁹⁹ Cf. *Apol.* 36.8.

tempore conscribebat, eam iudicibus nec quicquam amplius pro defensione sua addidisse, nisi ut audacter dementiae condemnarent, si carmina senis displicerent. Ibi ego comperior omnis iudices tanto poetae adsurrexisse, miris laudibus eum tulisse ob argumentum sollertiam et coturnum facundiae, nec ita multum omnis afuisse quin accusatorem potius dementiae condemnarent.

(The poet Sophocles, the rival of Euripides, whom he also survived (for he became extremely old), was accused by his son of insanity. It was alleged that he was 'out of his mind' due to his age. Then, it is said, he took a copy of his *Oedipus in Colonus*, that most excellent tragedy, which he happened to be writing at the time. He read it aloud to the judges, without adding a word in his defence, except that they should not hesitate to declare him 'insane', if they disliked the poem of an old man. At that point, so I read, all the judges rose for this great poet and praised him highly for the skilful plot and the solemn style. They all very nearly declared the accuser himself 'insane'!)

This is not simply a banal literary judgement, as Marache claims;¹⁰⁰ it is not accidental that Apuleius claims the judgement was given in favour of Sophocles due to his *coturnum facundiae* ('solemn style'), a technique that Apuleius prides himself on mastering.¹⁰¹ Apuleius associates himself with Sophocles for tactical purposes.

The philosophical stance is taken up again after this interlude and Apuleius launches first into a full-length discussion on the generation of fish (38–9), which culminates in his own, philosophical, catalogue of fish (and related species) with the words taken from Aristotle and an ironic warning directed at Aemilianus not to take this as a magic incantation (38.7f.):

Ausculda igitur quae dicam. Iam me clamabis magica nomina Aegyptio vel Babylonico ritu percensere—σελάχεια, μαλάκεια, μαλακόστρακα, χονδράκανθα, ὀστρακόδερμα, καρχαρόδοντα, ἀμφίβια, λεπιδωτά, φολιδωτά, δερμόπτερα, στεγανόποδα, μονήρη, συναγελαστικά

(Listen then to what I say. You will probably shout that I am giving a full list of magical words in Egyptian or Babylonian fashion: selacheia, malakeia, malakostraka, chondra-kantha, ostrakoderma, karcharodonta, amphibia, lepidota, pholidota, dermoptera, steganopoda, monere, sunagelastika)

Apuleius implies that he utters catalogues of inedible fish in the interests of philosophy and science only; after that he finally offers a literary catalogue of fish used for food, and again not from comedy,¹⁰² but eleven lines from Ennius, whom he had before cited as a tragedian. This Ennian translation

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Marache (1952: 324).

¹⁰¹ Cf. *Met.* 10.2 and especially *Flor.* 16.7, the passage on Philemon, a passage which in many ways resembles this one, for the choice of words.

¹⁰² On the many fish catalogues in comedy cf. Wilkins (2000: 293ff.).

of Arcestratus of Gela, the *Hedyphagetica*, is a mock-didactic poem¹⁰³ on where to buy and how to cook fish. Its function as the climax of Apuleius' fish argument is clear: besides offering an erudite point of relaxation, it stresses that writing about fish has nothing to do with magic, even if it is translated from Greek. Moreover, it enables Apuleius tacitly to identify with an author previously introduced as a tragedian who is also a philosopher, perhaps of the Pythagorean school.¹⁰⁴

Finally he even claims that a philosopher should not eat fish (maybe harking back to his Pythagorean example which he may have recalled to his audience by the reference to Ennius), but rather inspect it for scientific curiosity (*Apol.* 41.2):

'Piscem proscidisti' [says Aemilianus]. Quod crudum, id accusas? Si cocto ventrem ruspärer, hepätia suffoderem, ita ut apud te puerulus ille Sicinius Pudens suomet obsonio discit, eam rem non putares accusandam. Atqui maius crimen est philosopho comesse piscis quam inspicere.

('You cut up a fish'. That it was raw: is that your point? If it were cooked and I scrutinized its stomach and pierced its liver (just like young Sicinius Pudens is now learning to do so with you in his luxurious dining), you would not regard this as a possible accusation. In fact, for a philosopher it is a more serious charge to eat fish than to examine them!; trans. adapted)

Not Apuleius but Pudens, the young ward of Aemilianus and official accuser in this trial, is the one who learns how to indulge in gourmandism involving fish, all under the instruction of Aemilianus. Again Apuleius uses the word *obsonium* ('purchasing of food; provisions') within a comic context, as the associations of wasting money and irresponsibility going along with the emerging identification of Sicinius Pudens with a young man from comedy started in *Apol.* 30.10. This might explain why Apuleius took good care to dissociate himself from comic fish after the introductory section on fish-shopping. Instead, Apuleius identifies himself with famous philosophers and a tragedian, and leaves comic identification completely to his opponents. He ends this section with a flourish when he repeats his major line of defence with 'quis enim fando audivit ad magica maleficia *disquamari et exdorsari piscis solere*?' ('For who has ever heard of fish being scaled and stripped of their

¹⁰³ Fr. 28 Courtney (1993) has some reminiscences of Arcestratus fr. 56 Brandt. Arcestratus' latest editors, Olson and Sens (2000) give a detailed commentary on this fragment (pp. 241–5), arguing convincingly that it is an adaptation rather than an exact translation of Arcestratus' poem.—Fish as luxury food: Wilkins and Hill (1994: 21f.); Davidson (1997); Dohm (1964: *passim*).

¹⁰⁴ Ennius' use of the Pythagorean concept of metempsychosis: 'memini me fieri pavom' ('I remember that I was a peacock')—*Ann.* 1.11 = fr. ix Skutsch (1985) with commentary ad loc.; cf. also n. 92.

backbones for magical purposes?')¹⁰⁵ and cunningly implies that only his opponents could think of something as ridiculous as magic. This line is in addition a close reminiscence of the fish-cooking scene in Plaut. *Aul.* 398f., again firmly associating his opponents with characters from comedy:

ANTHRAX Dromo, *desquama piscis*. Tu, Machaerio,
congrum, murenam *exdorsua* quantum potest.

(ANTHRAX Dromo, *scale the fish*. You, Machaerio, *bone* the conger and the lamprey as much as possible.)

This technique of rendering his opponents comic and even ridiculous cannot be kept up during the discussion of the other minor magical charges Apuleius is accused of, since no element of comedy offers itself for comparison. Still, Apuleius manages to insert the occasional characterization in a comic style. So Thallus, the unfortunate epileptic slave whose fits Apuleius is accused of having caused, is portrayed in a manner resembling comic or mimic descriptions:¹⁰⁶ 'facie ulcerosus, fronte et occipitio conquassatus, oculis hebes, naribus hiulus, pedibus caducus' ('his face is full of sores, his brow and the back of his head are bruised, his sight is dim, his nostrils wide open, and he can hardly stand on his feet'). Fictional characterization through comedy is something Apuleius could have learned in his rhetorical training, and he employs it as Cicero had done before him. Apuleius later on draws close parallels between Aemilianus and Thallus, and thus indirectly characterizes Aemilianus as similarly unpleasant, for example in *Apol.* 44.7:¹⁰⁷ 'turpissimum puerum, corpore putri et morbido, caducum, barbarum, rusticanum' ('the boy is very ugly and has a decrepit and crippled body, [...] he is unsteady, barbaric, boorish') recalls the description of Aemilianus as *barbarus* and *rusticus* ('boorish' and 'uncivilized') in *Apol.* 10.6.¹⁰⁸

Another member of the opponent's group, Tannonius Pudens, is also linked with a bad actor of drama at the end of the Thallus episode (*Apol.* 46.1):

Tannonius Pudens, cum hoc quoque mendacium *frigere* ac prope iam omnium vultu et *murmure explosum* videret...

(When Tannonius Pudens saw that even this lie *was given a cool reception* and *was rejected* with the frowns and *murmurs* of nearly all...)

Hildebrand (ad loc.) notes the dramatic metaphor in *frigere*, which is the proper term for actors, musicians, or rhetoricians who displease their audience

¹⁰⁵ *Apol.* 42; cf. also Ter. *Ad.* 373ff. for some linguistic parallels.

¹⁰⁶ *Apol.* 43.8: Callebat (1998: 215f. = 1984) compares Plaut. *Merc.* 639f. (description of a *senex*) and Ter. *Hec.* 440f.

¹⁰⁷ Hunink (1997: ii.134) cites McCreight (1991: 188 n. 8).

¹⁰⁸ Cf. also *Apol.* 52 for the identification of Aemilianus and Thallus.

and do not receive applause,¹⁰⁹ and *murmure explosum* is the technical term for an audience booing an actor off the stage.¹¹⁰ Apuleius makes sure that the image of his opponents as comedy actors, and bad actors for that matter, is never forgotten.

The incident of the linen cloth, which apparently covers a sacred object in Apuleius' library—a ground for some suspicion—has little comic potential in itself, and Apuleius restricts himself to occasional comic vocabulary,¹¹¹ and the invective against Aemilianus which closes this section alludes to epic, as he is compared to Charon and Mezentius (*Apol.* 56.7).

This reticence in comic invective does not last long. In the next section, on nocturnal sacrifices, Apuleius lashes out wildly against the prosecution witness. Crassus, while absent on a journey to Alexandria, had lent his house to Apuleius' friend Quintianus. On coming back, Crassus claims to have found traces of nocturnal sacrifices in his house, smoke on the walls and bird feathers on the floor. Apuleius' defence is twofold (and not very convincing): first he claims that it is not very likely that he would leave a house in this state if he had really done something illegal involving magic (57–58.10), and secondly he makes the most of the fact that the witness Crassus is not in court by unleashing the worst possible invective on him, which is already hinted at in the first sentences of the section. The abuse follows the traditional pattern of invective, as found in Cicero's *In Pisonem*,¹¹² but comedy is the main source: as his name unfortunately suggests 'fat'¹¹³, he is immediately portrayed accordingly, with abusive words found in comedy¹¹⁴ but which may also have survived in everyday language.¹¹⁵ He is given all conceivable titles for 'glutton': *gumia*, *lurco*¹¹⁶ (57.1), *helluo* ('squanderer')¹¹⁷ (58.6 and 59.1),

¹⁰⁹ 'ita dicuntur proprie actores, musici, rhetores, qui plausum non ferunt et displicent'.

¹¹⁰ Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.), Wright (1931: 96f.) lists seven uses of this particular phrase in Cicero.

¹¹¹ e.g. *cella promptaria* ('store-room'; *Apol.* 54.8; cf. Plaut. *Amph.* 156); *crepundia* (literally 'rattle' or 'child's toy'; *Apol.* 56.1) here used as the religious amulets of an initiate, is more often used for the recognition tokens in comedy.—Of seventeen other instances in the PHI CD-ROM, twelve are Plautine, one from Plautine *argumenta*. Cf. the notes in Butler and Owen (1914) and Hunink (1997: ii. ad locc.).

¹¹² *Pis.* 13, cf. Hunink (1997: ii.153f.) quoting McCreight (1991: 83–91) and Harrison (2000: 73).

¹¹³ Cf. Plaut. *Pseud.* 659.

¹¹⁴ List of similar terms of abuse: Naevius 118 Ribbeck: 'pessimorum pessime, audax, ganeo, lustru, aleo!' ('Blackest of utter blackguards, barefaced gorgers! You loafer, gambler!'). Cf. Opelt (1965: 157ff.) on greedy eating habits as part of invective, and on *ganeo* and *helluo*. On *crassus* as an insult cf. Corbeil (1996: 141).

¹¹⁵ Butler and Owen (1914: p. lxxv) warn against unreflectingly assuming the derivation of these words from comedy, but the cumulative evidence of comic references argues for at least comic consciousness on Apuleius' part when using these words.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Plaut. *Persa* 421.

¹¹⁷ Ter. *Haut.* 1033, but also in Cicero.

belua ('monster')¹¹⁸ (59.6), and characterized as someone who likes to spend most of his time in cheap eateries. Apuleius even claims that Crassus was only able to smell the smoke on his return because he had gone straight into the kitchen: 'nisi forte Crassus non in cubiculum reversus perrexit, sed suo more recta ad focum' ('unless Crassus on his return did not go to the bedroom but, as usual, straight to the kitchen!').¹¹⁹ His sense of smell is so highly developed that he even smelled his Oea kitchen smoke all the way from Alexandria, surpassing even the keen noses of beasts of prey (57.5):

Sin vero naribus nidorem domesticum praesensit, vincit idem sagacitate odorandi canes et vulturios. Cui enim cani, cui vulturio Alexandrini caeli quicquam abusque Oeensium finibus oboleat?

(If he literally smelled the odour of his house, he also has a far better nose than dogs and vultures. For what dog, what vulture in the Alexandrian sky, can smell anything all the way from the land of Oea?)

The invective culminates in a description which, though generically derived from Cicero's invective, is reminiscent of that of the slave Thallus and generally of comedy.¹²⁰ We may note that the mask of the parasite is listed in Pollux¹²¹ under those of the young men. It is beardless, balding, perhaps with a puffy face, and the parasite spends much of his time in the wrestling-school:¹²²

*caput iuvenis barba et capillo populatum, madentis oculos, cilia turgentia, rictum <...>, salivosa labia vocem absonam, manuum tremorem, ructus <po>pinam.*¹²³ Patrimonium omne iam *abligurrit*, nec quicquam ei de bonis paternis superest.

(You would notice a *young man's head bereaved of beard and hair*, watery eyes, swollen eyelids, a broad grin, slobbering lips, and ugly voice, trembling hands, and a breath smelling of cheap eating-places. He *squandered* all of his patrimony long ago and nothing of his paternal property is left.)

¹¹⁸ Ten times in Plautus, three times in Terence.

¹¹⁹ *Apol.* 58.7—Other instances of the same gluttony: 58.10 etc.

¹²⁰ 59.6f.—Also observed by Hunink (1997: ii.159).

¹²¹ Cf. Ch 2.1 above.

¹²² Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: i. 22ff.): Pollux mask nos 17 and 18: 'Κόλαξ δὲ καὶ παράσιτος μέλανες, οὐ μὴν ἔξω παλαίστρας, ἐπίγρυμποι, εὐπαθείς. τῷ δὲ παρασίτῳ μᾶλλον κατέαγε τὰ ὦτα, καὶ φαιδρότερός ἐστιν, ὥσπερ ὁ κόλαξ ἀνατέταται κακοηθέστερον τὰς ὀφρῦς. ('The Flatterer and the Parasite are dark-skinned, but not more so than frequenters of the palaestra: they are hook-nosed, comfortable; the Parasite's ears are more battered, and he looks more cheerful, while the Flatterer raises his brows more maliciously'; trans. Webster, Green, and Seeberg)—This more than vague description is explained in pp. 22ff. by comparing it with extant masks. Their mask no. 18 (the parasite) allows for considerable variation of masks, but the four specimens which Pollux seems to link with the parasite are all beardless, and some representations in art are balding (cf. p. 23f.). The parasite's gluttony is however a Plautine invention and would thus not be portrayed overtly on Greek masks (cf. Lowe (1989: 164)).

¹²³ This is the reading chosen by Butler and Owen (1914: 123) and Hunink (1997: i.77).

Abligurrire ('to eat up dainties; to squander') is a comic word: in Terence it is found in the mouth of a parasite, in a phrase which seems to be recalled in Apuleius' version:¹²⁴ 'itidem patria qui abligurrierat bona' ('someone who had guzzled up his patrimony like me'). *Ligurrire* ('to lick off, to sponge on') is also used by Plautus in a parasite's monologue describing his 'job':¹²⁵

parasiti rebus prolatis latent
in occulto miseri, victitant suco suo,
dum ruri rurant homines quos *ligurriant*.

(when there are bank holidays, the poor parasites hide in their hiding places and live off their own juices, while the people from whom they usually sponge escape to the country.)

This parasite, Ergasilus, also compares himself to several beasts of prey in the same monologue: *mures* ('mice', 77), *cocleae* ('snails', 80), and finally Molossan hunting dogs: *venatici* | *Molossici* (85f.).¹²⁶ The comparison with hunting dogs implies a good sense of smell, an asset parasites are believed to have,¹²⁷ and parasites are often metaphorically associated with greedy animals. Crassus, Apuleius argues, acts much like a parasite, especially since he is absent from the court in order to pursue his usual parasitical business: gluttony, drinking, and bathing, cf. *Apol.* 59: 'dico Crassum iam dudum ebrium stertere, aut secundo lavacro ad repotia cenae obeunda vinulentum sudorem in balneo desudare' ('I am sure that Crassus has long been drunk and snoring, or is taking a second bath and sweating out his inebriated sweat in the bathhouse, to prepare for an after-dinner drinking bout').

Evidently Apuleius has the stock comic type of the parasite in mind when he describes Crassus as a food- and wine-devouring glutton whose sense of smell when food is concerned is keener than that of dogs (cf. *Apol.* 57.5). Furthermore, in 100.4 the entourage of Aemilianus and Rufinus is called 'temulentum illud collegium, parasitos tuos' 'the whole drunken collection, those parasites of yours!', and Apuleius had made much of the drunkenness of Crassus.

Scholars, probably under the influence of 81.4, 'si cum hac una Rufini fallacia contenduntur, macc[h]i prorsus et bucc[h]ones videbuntur' ('if compared with this single deceit of Rufinus, will seem no more than clowns and jokers') have inferred that Crassus is here depicted as a *maccus*, a figure of the

¹²⁴ Ter. *Eun.* 235. Cf. 936, where *ligurrire* is used disparagingly of voracious *meretrices*. Cf. also above Ch. 2.6. On the metaphor of eating away one's riches and generally on deformities in oratory cf. Corbeill (1996: 131ff.).

¹²⁵ Ergasilus in *Capt.* 82ff.

¹²⁶ Cf. Damon (1997: 28 with n. 16) on animal imagery for parasites.

¹²⁷ Plaut. *Men.* 163–70, *Mil.* 41.

Roman *Atellana*,¹²⁸ and the literary parallels point also to the mimic or comic parasite at this stage. There was already some conflation between the two types in Roman comedy,¹²⁹ and Apuleius makes sure that the parasitical (and, since he is, as Apuleius claims, lying, sycophantic) behaviour of Crassus is portrayed in the crassest way by referencing the *Atellana*.

This stock character is not exactly a sympathetic figure in Roman comedy, and with this mask Crassus will be good company for the assorted disagreeable comedy cast that Apuleius is going to put on the Sabrathan stage in the third great section of his defence, the argument against his seduction of Pudentilla by magic.¹³⁰

4.5. REFUTATION OF 'MAJOR' CHARGES CONCERNING PUDENTILLA'S MARRIAGE 66–101

Some scholars have noted (though not in great detail) that in this section the main opponents, Rufinus, the father-in-law of the dead Pontianus, and his wife and daughter, are portrayed as stock characters from comedy.¹³¹ This greedy group is unleashed on the little boy (*puerulus*) Sicinius Pudens (the second son of Pudentilla) after the death of the girl's first husband, Pontianus, Pudens' elder brother and Pudentilla's firstborn, in order to turn Sicinius Pudens against his own mother and her husband Apuleius. Apuleius makes sure that they are described in a most unfavourable way, and the literary allusions to the greedy pimps (*lenones*) and wicked courtesans (*meretrices malae*) abundant in Plautus and Terence naturally are helpful for his argument.

However, before this *trio infernale* is considered, it is necessary to see how Apuleius describes his own wife, Pudentilla. She is a rich widow in her early forties, thus ten or fifteen years his senior.¹³² Apuleius, whose trial is ostensibly about magic but effectively about being a legacy hunter trying to enrich himself by her dowry, has to make sure from the beginning that he does not

¹²⁸ Thus Marchesi (1957: ad loc.); Callebat (1984: 165); Sallmann (1995: 147); Hunink (1997: ii.159)—the latter three without explanation.

¹²⁹ Lowe (1989: 164, 168) argues that Plautine additions to the parasite type, like greediness, might derive from his integration of Atellan characters into his comedies. *Bac.* 1088 shows familiarity with the *bucco*, *Asin.* 11 and *Merc.* 10 with the *maccus*.

¹³⁰ I cannot find any comic elements in the last section of the 'minor' magical charges, dealing with Apuleius' wooden statuette of Hermes.

¹³¹ Cf. the short analysis in Callebat (1984: 165f.), who describes Rufinus as the *leno*, his daughter as the *meretrix*, Sicinius Pudens as the *adulescens amans*, and Crassus as the *Maccus* from the *Atellana*. Hunink (1998: *passim*) is at times imprecise in his definition of comic characters; Sallmann's (1995: 143) remark is made in passing, and only briefly elaborated upon p. 147.

¹³² For her age cf. the appendix in Butler and Owen (1914: p. xix f.), Fantham (1995: 220–32).

represent himself as gaining anything through the marriage. Already in the division, and repeated many times afterwards, is the statement (*Apol.* 66.2), that he stands to lose from the marriage:

me, quem lucri cupiditate invasisse Pudentillae domum dictitant, si ullum lucrum cogitarem, fugere semper a domo ista debuisse; quin et in ceteris *causis minime prosperum matrimonium, nisi ipsa mulier tot incommoda virtutibus suis repensaret*, inimicum.

(They keep on saying that I ‘invaded Pudentilla’s house’ in pursuit of profit, but it should become fully clear to everyone that, had I really set my mind on profit, I would have had to keep away from that house at all times. For in general terms *this marriage would not be advantageous at all*, or would even harm my interests, *if the woman herself did not compensate for all discomforts through her virtues*.)

Here as well as later on in his *narratio* about her reasons for remarriage, he downplays his monetary gain and stresses her virtues, as it is in his interests to exaggerate exactly these aspects of their marriage. The vocabulary used to describe her is not taken from comedy. This, too, excludes Pudentilla firmly from any comic association with the stock figure of the *mulier dotata* (a richly dowered woman), which the audience might have suspected her to be in real life. The *mulier dotata* is a rich woman only married for her dowry, whose virtues are few and maledictions (usually of her poor husband) abundant.¹³³ Since this is a negatively cast character in comedy, Apuleius avoids association with it by stressing the opposite characteristics in Pudentilla throughout the *narratio*, and later (*Apol.* 90ff., esp. 92) makes it clear that there is no dowry to speak of coming with his wife. Again it is evident that Apuleius tries to keep himself and his side out of the comedy of which he is the stage-manager.

His enemies, however, are again not spared: Rufinus looks like a full-blown *leno* from comedy. Pollux in his description of masks from New Comedy describes the brothelkeeper in a way that is highly reminiscent of Rufinus, as balding or bald:¹³⁴

“Ο δὲ πορνοβοσκὸς τᾶλλα μὲν ἔοικε τῷ Λυκομηδείῳ, τὰ δὲ χεῖλη ὑποσέσηρε καὶ συνάγει τὰς ὀφρῦς, καὶ ἀναφаланτίας ἢ φαλακρός.

(The Brothelkeeper in other respects is like the Lycomedian, but he has a smile on his lips and draws his brows together; he has receding hair or is bald; trans. Webster, Green, and Seeberg)

Compare Rufinus’ description in 74.7: ‘olim in pueritia, priusquam isto calvitio deformaretur’ (‘long ago, before this baldness started to disfigure him’)¹³⁵ Plautine *lenones* are ‘characterized by greed and accused of impiety,

¹³³ Cf. Fantham (1975) on the *mulier dotata* in comedy.

¹³⁴ Mask no. 8: Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: i.14).

¹³⁵ Lavish description of Rufinus’ character: cf. Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.).

perjury, faithlessness, cruelty and inhumanity' as well as 'boastful and stupid',¹³⁶ and Rufinus is accused of sharing some of these features:¹³⁷

Hic est enim pueruli huius instigator, hic accusationis auctor [...] hic testium coemptor, hic totius calumniae fornacula [...] idque apud omnis intemperantissime gloriatur, me suo machinatu reum postulatum. [...] omnium simulationum architectus.

(he is the instigator of this little boy, he is the bringer of this accusation, [...] the buyer of witnesses; he is the furnace where this whole calumny was forged [...]. In front of everyone he keeps boasting without any self-control that it is through his machinations that I have been indicted. [...] the architect of all pretences.)

Worse than this is his profession as an effeminate pantomime dancer in his early years (*Apol.* 74):¹³⁸

Mox in iuventute saltandis fabulis exossis plane et enervis, sed, ut audio, indocta et rudi mollitia; negatur enim quicquam histrionis habuisse praeter impudicitiam.

(Later, as a youth, he turned to performing pantomime; he seemed to be without bones or sinews, but this softness (so it is said) was both unskilled and unrefined. For it is said that he possessed nothing of an actor's character except for sexual impurity.)

Rufinus' effeminacy continues into his adult life, and again a member of the opposition is compared to an unskilled actor, this time of pantomime, where (Apuleius implies) effeminacy might be useful in the portrayal of female characters, as he later on suggests (cf. *Apol.* 78.3ff.). Rufinus and his wife own an extremely unvirtuous house, and have an equally unvirtuous and adulterous marriage (75):

Domus eius tota *lenonia*, tota familia contaminata; ipse *propudiosus*, uxor *lupa*, filii similes. Prorsus diebus ac noctibus ludibrio iuventutis *ianua calcibus propulsata*, fenestrae *canticis circumstrepitae*, triclinium comisatoribus inquietum, cubiculum *adulteris* pervium. Neque enim ulli ad introeundum metus est, nisi qui *pretium* marito non attulit.

(His whole house is that of a *pimp*, his whole household corrupt. He himself is *infamous*, his wife a *whore*, and his sons are of the same calibre. All day and night young people have their fling; *there is kicking at the doors* and *noisy singing* at the windows, the dining room is swarming with revellers, the bedroom open to *adulterers*. For nobody needs to fear going in, provided he has paid the *price* to the husband.)

¹³⁶ Duckworth (1994: 262).

¹³⁷ *Apol.* 74.5ff.

¹³⁸ On the ill-repute of actors cf. Edwards (1993: Ch. 3). Cf. Opelt (1965: 155ff.) on sexual misdemeanour as an abusive motif.

This is an explicit description of a brothel displaying some parallels from comedy,¹³⁹ complete with the *cantica*¹⁴⁰ which the young men who want to be let in sing outside its doors. Long invectives full of Plautine vocabulary sketch Rufinus' family in bold colours;¹⁴¹ Rufinus, the pimp of his own wife (perhaps the outcome of his effeminacy?), manages to entrap first Pontianus, who is explicitly called *amans adulescentulus* ('the young lover')¹⁴² (another stock character), with his daughter's meretricious skills, and after Pontianus' death manages to get young Sicinius Pudens under his control, too. Sicinius Pudens is to fall into the same trap and marry the undeserving *meretrix*, too, as the second young man to do so in this comedy. Pudens' 'education' runs on the lines of a young man from comedy: he indulges in expensive food, notably fish (see above), and in the older *meretrix*¹⁴³ kindly offered to him by a *leno* with the hope of further profit; he turns his back on his family in order to live with his girl (*Apol.* 97.7–98.1):

admodum puero [sc. Sicinio] eandem illam *filiae suae machinam* Rufinus admovet ac *mulierem aliquam multo natu maiorem*, nuperrime uxorem fratris, misero puero obicit et obsternit. A[i]t ille puellae *meretricis blandimentis et lenonis patris illectamentis* captus et possessus.

(Although the latter is still a boy, as you see, Rufinus is moving the same *siege-engine* into place: *his daughter*. So a *considerably older woman*, who until very recently was the wife of his brother, is pressed and imposed upon the poor boy. The lad was conquered and mastered by the *allurements of the whorish girl* and the enticements of her *pimping father*.)

and (*Apol.* 98.6):

Cum a nobis regeretur, ad magistros itabat; ab iis nunc magna fugela in *ganeum* fugit, amicos serios aspernatur, cum adulescentulis postremissumis *inter scorta et pocula* puer hoc aevi convivium agitat.

(As long as he was governed by us, he used to go to school. Now he rapidly flees from there to go *to the taverns*. Spurning serious friends, he joins the most depraved youths to feast and party (at his age!) *with whores and drink*.)

¹³⁹ Hunink (1997: ii. ad 75.2) notes that the style is comic, but does not explain why. Some words, e.g. *propudiosus*, are Plautine, cf. Callebat (1968: 512) (cf. e.g. *Truc.* 271, *Stich.* 334). McGinn (1998: 188–92) discusses the legal dimension of the passage. On the *effeminatus* cf. Corbeill (1996: 127–73).

¹⁴⁰ *Cantica* sung by *exclusi amatores* (locked-out lovers) do not appear in comedy alone, but some of their most noticeable instances derive from this genre, e.g. Plaut. *Curc.* 147ff. Cf. Copley (1956: 28–42).

¹⁴¹ Cf. the commentaries *passim*.

¹⁴² *Apol.* 77. 3, in the dative.

¹⁴³ On the age of the *filia* cf. Hunink (1997: ii. 239) with further literature, who does not think that the girl is much older than Pudens.

This is highly reminiscent of the sins of young men in comedy: for example Plaut. *Most.* 959f.: 'Triduum unum est haud intermissum hic esse et bibi, scorta duci, pergraecari' ('there were not three days when there was no eating and drinking, wenching and doing things the Greek way')¹⁴⁴ The phrase *in ganeum fugit* ('he flees [...] to the taverns') picks up Apuleius' criticism of Pudens' extravagant and wasteful eating habits (cf. above on fish), that Aemilianus has taught him. This is comic, too: Plaut. *Most.* 22f.:

Dies noctesque bibite, pergraecamini,
Amicas emite et liberate, pascite
Parasitos, obsonate pollucibiliter

(You drink day and night, do Greek things, buy girlfriends and set them free, feed parasites and go shopping for sumptuous food!)

Usually the young man is a sympathetic character, not beyond reform, and the audience is led to hope that he gets the girl in the end. Sicinius Pudens, however, is far from that stage. His education under Rufinus and Aemilianus reduced him to a barbarian, Apuleius claims, who wastes his money on tarts. There might be reminiscences from Terence, *Adelphoe* at 98: 'at nunc adeo patientem te ei praebes itaque eum indulgentia corrumpis, adeo ei nulla re adversare' ('But now you are patient with him and spoil him by your indulgence and oppose him in nothing whatever'), a notion also uttered by Terence's Demea (*Ad.* 96ff.) in accusing the lenient Micio, who has adopted and spoilt his nephew.

Callebat (1998: 211ff.=1984) points out that Apuleius' recourse to dramatic literature can even be paralleled by his employment of comic metre: *Apol.* 85.7, in a comic context, namely the description of a young man scolding his mother, starts in the form of a Roman *canticum* (that is in anapaests, molossi, and bacchiacs). Pudens' accusations against his mother as Apuleius phrases them are comic, and thus, Apuleius implies, should not be taken seriously. Pudens' description as a debauched comic *adulescens* is however best brought out in Apuleius' malicious quotation from an unknown *palliata*¹⁴⁵

Est ille poetae versus non ignotus: 'odi puerulos praecoqui sapientia', sed enim malitia praecoqui puerum qui non averteretur atque oderit, cum videat velut monstrum quoddam prius robustum scelere quam tempore, ante nocentem quam potentem, viridi pueritia, cana malitia?

(There is this well-known verse 'I hate little boys who are wise before their age', but what about a boy who is wicked before his age? Who would not turn away from him and hate him, seeing a sort of monster that is more swiftly mature in crime than in age, culpable before he is capable, green in youth but grey in wickedness?)

¹⁴⁴ Instances are legion; cf. *Asin.* 602, *Most.* 64, 235, *Truc.* 904 etc.

¹⁴⁵ *Apol.* 85 = *pall. incert.* 95 Ribbeck.

Pudens is even worse and more loathsome than a young boy who is wise before his years, since he is malicious at a young age, with the debauchery of a grey-haired old man. The latter links Pudens very closely with the grey-haired Aemilianus.

Interestingly, Apuleius' opponents undergo a metamorphosis of character during the course of the speech. Aemilianus, at one instant linked with a tragic mask, even though the repulsive one of Thyestes, later on becomes a morally debased and greedy caricature of an old man. Rufinus goes through a similar degradation. From a fully fledged *leno* in the brothel cameo, Apuleius reduces him to an emasculated and effeminate pantomime dancer acting the part of women (78.3f.):

Tune effeminatissime, tua manu cuidam viro mortem minitari<s>? At qua tandem manu? Philomelae an Medae an Clytemnestrae? Quas tamen cum saltas—tanta mo<l>itia animi, tanta formido ferri est—, sine cludine saltas.

(So you, the most effeminate of men, are threatening death to a real male with your own hand? But what hand will it be? That of Philomela, or Medea, of Clytemnestra? But if you perform these roles, you do so without a dagger: such is your weakness, such your fear of steel!)

Finally, as already mentioned, Rufinus is linked with the stupid *macci* and *buccones* of the *fabula Atellana* and low comedy (81.4). As he moves across Apuleius' stage, he is—not unlike Cicero's Clodia—slowly degraded from a character of Roman comedy—a *leno*, but still a member of a respectable genre, to a pantomime dancer, and finally to the depths of Atellan farce.

Against this background of opponents reduced from membership of respectable dramatic genres to participants in non-respectable subliterate farces, Apuleius can fall back into comedy for a single instant. Only once does Apuleius use comedy to describe himself and Pudentilla: when he looks for an explanation for the marriage taking place in the countryside, he claims that this is done to save money (87.10), and to enhance the bride's fertility, ending the argument with a metaphorical quotation from an unknown Greek comic writer, which resembles the Greek engagement formulae (88.6):¹⁴⁶

Ibi et ille celeberrimus in comoediis versus de proximo congruit: παίδων ἐπ' ἀρότω, γνησίων ἐπὶ σπορᾷ

(Here this well-known verse from comedy is quite appropriate: 'To produce children, to generate legal offspring.')

¹⁴⁶ Not in the extant corpus of Menander, but *Pk.* 1013f., as Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.) notes, is close enough.

This is quite a different comedy from the low-life scenario with brothel-keepers and *meretrices* of the Rufinus family, whose main object is not the procreation of children (as Apuleius claims his is, by quoting this text), but the enriching of themselves.¹⁴⁷

If there is a young married couple at the end of a comedy, they stay together happily ever after; marriages with Rufinus' promiscuous *filia* are doomed and, as Apuleius darkly hints, life-threatening. Apuleius' 'happy ending' with Pudentilla is that of respectable (and possibly Menandrian) comedies, not that of low-life scenarios also found in the more exuberant Roman comedies. It is thus perhaps significant that the one quotation linking him with comedy is taken from a Greek, not a Latin, text and echoes the wedding ritual.

In this context, finally, one other element of drama in connection to Pudentilla's letter is important: an invited comparison of Pudentilla with Phaedra (*Apol.* 97). Apuleius, certain of his victory over his opponents once this letter will have been read out completely, pretends that her letter may be considered as written under duress or as proof of her insanity: (*Apol.* 79): 'an sola Phaedra falsum epistolum de amore commenta est' ('Or is Phaedra the only woman who made up a false letter about love?'). This is a reference to Phaedra's letter to Theseus (cf. E. *Hipp.* 856ff.) and fleetingly associates Pudentilla with an exemplary unsympathetic heroine from tragedy. Since Apuleius immediately proceeds to use the (Greek) letter in his defence, proving that neither allegation was true, he in fact disassociates Pudentilla from Phaedra (an older woman besotted with a younger man): her letter is truthful, and thus the disassociation from Phaedra functions as another, rather drastic, proof of Pudentilla's sanity and his own innocence.

The letter itself is then personified: (*Apol.* 81.1): 'superest ea pars epistulae, quae similiter pro me scripta in memet ipsum vertit cornua' ('What remains is the part of the letter that was equally written in my defence but has turned its horns against me'). 'Turning horns against someone' is a metaphor from comedy:¹⁴⁸ cf. *Pseud.* 1020f. (scil. *formido*) 'ne malus item erga me sit ut erga illum fuit, | ne in re secunda nunc mi obvortat cornua' ('I fear that this evil fellow will act against me as he has acted against him, and now when he is lucky he might turn his horns against me.'). This is Pseudolus' praise for Simia, who has successfully deceived Ballio with a letter. Apuleius again

¹⁴⁷ He actually uses comic imagery to contrast Pudentilla with a young girl in order to stress his lack of interest in her dowry: *Apol.* 92 'virgo formosa, quamquam sit oppido pauper, tamen abunde dotata est' ('a beautiful virgin, although very poor, is still well enough dowered'; adapted). Cf. Norden (1912: 95 n. 3), who states that this notion occurs in comedy, too. Pudentilla, Apuleius argues, does not have this gift of virginity any longer, which is the only type of dowry that would remain with the husband anyway. He is thus to receive no dowry of any kind from Pudentilla.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Deufert (2002: 206).

portrays himself as an innocent victim of a *machinator* of a comic intrigue, since the harmless letter is used against him unjustly. To link Rufinus once again with the comic genre from which Apuleius disassociates himself, he also turns him into the arch-deviser of dangerous plots, and again associates his enemy with comic stock types (*Apol.* 81.4):

Omnes isti quos nominavi et si qui praeterea fuerunt dolo memorandi, si cum hac una Rufini fallacia contenduntur, macc[h]i prorsus et bucc[h]ones videbuntur.

(All those whom I mentioned and any other legendary crooks, if compared with this single deceit of Rufinus, will seem no more than clowns and jokers.)

Rufinus is more dangerous than the fools found in Atellan farce—he is compared unflatteringly with characters from low comedy.

4.6. CONCLUSION

Generally Apuleius, who portrays himself as a philosopher or a serious *litteratus*, such as an author of drama (cf. the Sophocles episode), studiously avoids associating himself too closely with stock comic figures, although he could have done this in some parts of his defence. There would have been an obvious opportunity when the matter of the liberation of the three slaves was discussed (*Apol.* 17). A young man arriving in a strange city with only one slave is comic material, and it is exploited for example in the *Menaechmi*. Liberation of slaves at weddings is another stock situation at the end of a comedy, which results in the liberation of the *servus callidus* who brought about the wedding.¹⁴⁹ If Apuleius had wanted to make a reference to comedy here, he could have done so by quoting Plautus or by using words taken from comedy. Instead, he most studiously avoids the association, which would cast him in the role of the young (and sometimes irresponsible) *adulescens*, a role which he firmly associates with the young Sicinius Pudens. Pudens, instead, is the young man who has his band of parasites for aid against Apuleius (cf. *Apol.* 100.4).¹⁵⁰

Another unexploited opportunity for comic associations is the long discussion about buying fish. There are many catalogues of food, especially fish, in Greek or—to a lesser extent—in Roman comedy. Instead of quoting one of

¹⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. Plaut. *Epid.* 721ff. Cf. Thompson (1977–8: 3f.) for a discussion of Apuleius' *familia* and the small chance that Apuleius would have manumitted three of Pudentilla's slaves after the wedding.

¹⁵⁰ 'temulentum illud collegium, parasitos tuos' ('the whole drunken collection, those parasites of yours').

them, which he surely could have done, Apuleius quotes an Ennian translation of Arcestratus of Gela, which is a didactic poem and not comedy.

A third instance of avoidance of Roman comedy is the country wedding. The fact that he had actually received a large patrimony and spent it before coming to Oea (23) could also have been embellished by comic references, but instead Apuleius gives a philosopher's answer and a Praise of Poverty in 17ff. He stresses that he reduced his inherited fortune by 'longa peregrinatione et diutinis studiis et crebris liberalitatibus' ('travelling abroad for a long time, extended studies, and frequent instances of generosity'; *Apol.* 23.2), that is on honourable and socially accepted causes. This is far from the things the young Pudens is said to have spent his money on: food and a *meretrix*, the usual drains on a comic young man.¹⁵¹ Again it is Pudens, not Apuleius, who is cast in the role of the irresponsible *adulescens* of comedy.¹⁵²

Naturally, it is Apuleius' opponents who are continuously associated with comedy. It is the opposition which uses (as Apuleius maintains) comic language, which is urged to speak fish catalogues, but which ironically denies at the same time that fish is food and food only, which is its sole purpose in comedy. Aemilianus is a rash and silly *senex rusticus* ('rustic old man'), and Crassus, Rufinus, his family, and Pudentilla's young sons form the perfect unsympathetic cast for a low-life comedy (with the two sons not without possible redemption, as such characters are usually forgiven and reformed characters at the end of the comedies). Apuleius hopes that this association will have the same effect as that employed by Cicero: the unsympathetic characters of comedy will be laughed out of court, or even booed off the stage, since, as Apuleius constantly reminds us, they are bad actors, too. On the other hand, Apuleius suggests that he himself is to be identified with philosophers and tragedians.

To return to Cicero's example set in the *Pro Caelio*: some of the invective tactics employed by Apuleius to win his similarly dangerous case are the same. Both speeches start with quotations from comedy and portray their opponents as stock characters who descend lower and lower. They are all unsympathetic characters portrayed in a similar situation, a comic brothel, and it is the judges who decree the happy ending of the comedy in favour of the speaker.

Two major differences are evident, though, the portrayal of the *adulescentes* and the speaker's own self-portrait. The sympathetically portrayed Caelius is mirrored in Apuleius' friend Pontianus, who erred first with the *meretrix* and left Apuleius' side but then came back to him. Sicinius Pudens is by contrast

¹⁵¹ Hunink (1997: ii. ad loc.)

¹⁵² Cf. Duckworth (1994: 273–9) on wealth and poverty in comedy.

in the more debased state of the *adulescens*' progress, still under the spell of the prostitute. Furthermore, Cicero stars in his play in the role of an indulgent father,¹⁵³ but Apuleius takes care to stay outside the low farce.¹⁵⁴ There is no sympathetic stock role for him to play, and he prefers his chosen role as a philosopher and *litteratus* to one of a mere participant in his own, slowly developing but nevertheless highly successful, comedy.

¹⁵³ May (1988: 109) aptly remarks: 'One of the strongest corroborating tactics that gives credence to this picture of Caelius' character [sc. as a recently reformed young man ready to take responsibility in the state] is Cicero's identification with his client.' Cf. also id. p. 116.

¹⁵⁴ Sallmann (1995: 154) reaches a similar conclusion by analysing the narrative strategy: 'Das ist kein Satyrspiel wie Ciceros Caelius-Story oder der Rufinus-Comic: [...] Pudentillas und Apuleius' Gestalten bleiben makellos, die des Pontianus wird eingewaschen, Pudens vom enttäuschten Stiefvater zurechtgewiesen, Aemilianus und Rufinus werden als Teufel entlarvt.'

The Texture of the *Metamorphoses*

5.1. INTRODUCTION

It is now time to look at the *Metamorphoses* and the employment of drama in this novel, and to test the hypothesis that the texture of the novel is loosely inspired by the dramatic, or in the narrower sense, the comic genre. This idea is not to be confused with the question of the origin of the novel. In contrast to scholars like Rohde who want to derive the origin of the novel from other genres, my argument is based on conscious intertextual allusion to these other genres, the use of readerly expectations triggered by comic markers, and the play with them. Apuleius, in creating a Latin adaptation of a comic-realistic Greek text, follows the example of the Roman comic writers: he emulates Plautus and Terence by adapting a Greek text into Latin while creating a very Roman work of art. Plautus, because of Apuleius' archaizing tendencies and the predilection for comedy shown in Apuleius' other works, is an obvious point of comparison, and the use of Plautine vocabulary reinforces the comicality of the plot; but some structural elements based on drama and added by Apuleius to the texture of his novel can be traced as well.

Elements of comedy in the *Metamorphoses* can be found at several different levels. Arguably, this use of specifically comic terminology and intertextuality occurs at structurally marked points and certain key places of the *Metamorphoses*.

Stage words, for example the word for 'curtain', or the description of a *scaena* or theatre, may obviously work as markers within the text to point towards a theatrical context. The 'metatheatrical' procedure of some comic playwrights, notably Plautus, in destroying the dramatic illusion by allowing characters within the play suddenly to address the audience directly may be paralleled in Apuleius' presentation of his narrator as addressing the reader directly. Stock structural elements of comedy, such as the prologue or the end of the play, will be compared to the respective passages in Apuleius' novel in order to detect echoes, similarities, or differences. In this chapter, these different elements are to be analysed as they occur throughout the *Metamorphoses*.

5.2. THE PROLOGUE

The first impression readers of a literary piece get derives from the programmatic first chapter of the work once they open the papyrus roll; the impression a reader of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* gets has puzzled scholarship for many years.¹

It seems certain² that the *persona* assumed by the 'prologus' is neither that of Apuleius the author nor of Lucius, the first-person narrator of the story.³ Harrison (1990c) has suggested the interesting idea of the book itself speaking the prologue, but one of the most convincing and influential approaches to the problem is that of Smith,⁴ who sees the speaker of the prologue as assuming the persona of the *prologus* of Plautine comedies.⁵ He compares the prologue of Plautus' *Menaechmi* for the similar promise of a short *argumentum* ('plot-summary'),⁶ followed by extensive jokes, and that of the *Asinaria* (13f.) for a similar concept of pleasure to be had from the plot. Furthermore, Apuleius' promise to stroke the reader's or audience's ears ('*aturesque tuas benivolās...permulceam*'; *Met.* 1.1) may recall an earlier passage from the same play (*Asin.* 4): '*face nunciam tu, praeco, omnem auritum poplum*' ('Now, herald, make the audience all ears').⁷ Not only is this wish as far as Lucius is concerned fulfilled later in the novel, the joke is also taken up again in *Met.* 1.20, when Lucius proclaims that the story of Socrates enabled him to ride to Hypata on his 'ears' (*meis auribus*).

¹ So much, indeed, that a rather large volume is dedicated wholly to the prologue of the *Metamorphoses*: Kahane and Laird (2001), dealing with a wide range of intertexts, e.g. Theocritus: Gibson (2001); the Gospel of Luke: Smith (2001). Winkler (1985: 200–2) deals with the prologue from a narratological perspective.

² Pace De Jong (2001).

³ Cf. Smith (1972: 516 = 1999: 198); Harrison (1990: 193f.), whose punctuation I also accept (cf. Harrison and Winterbottom (2001)).

⁴ Smith (1972 = 1999). The identity of the speaker is still a conundrum; cf. the vote taken in Kahane and Laird (2001: 5).

⁵ Latest bibliography: Dowden (2001: 128 with n. 17), with a helpful summary of points of comparison between Apuleius' and Plautus' prologues pp. 134–6. He lists the 'point of view' of the *prologus* standing outside the action, the narration of the *argumentum* (with exceptions), the identification of the speaker (or its refusal in Apuleius), the promise of brevity and request for attention, the problem of adapting Greek into Latin, and the originality of the playwright. For a summary of the usual Plautine prologue elements: Christenson (2000: 130f.); Gratwick (1993: 30–3). On the interplay between Greekness and Romanness in the prologue cf. Keulen (2003a: 20f.).

⁶ Cf. *Men.* 5ff.; Apuleius prologue is however silent about the plot, but concentrates on the riddle of the speaker's identity, which is not clear in *Menaechmi* either.

⁷ Cf. Smith (1972: 516 = 1999: 197) for *Men.* 5–10, p. 519 = 201 for *Asin.* (1. 13f.: '*Inest lepos ludusque in hac comoedia | Ridicula res est. Date benigne operam mihi*' ('This comedy is full of charm and sport. The situation is funny, please be attentive.')). Cf. Gowers (2001: 82f.). On the importance of listening in the *Metamorphoses*, cf. James (1991: 168ff.).

Fabulae palliatae form a good *tertium comparationis* for an author who adapts a Greek novel into a Latin one, and who is intent on embellishing and rewriting it considerably, up to the point even of changing the ending. ‘Maccus vortit barbare’ (‘Maccus translated it into barbarian [i.e. Latin]’) is how Plautus puts it in his *Asinaria* prologue (*Asin.* 11; cf. *Trin.* 19), and Apuleius’ prologue itself elaborately points out that his book is ‘turned’ from Greek into Latin, indicating an indebtedness to Greek literature: ‘fabulam Graecanicam incipimus, lector intende: laetaberis’.⁸ (‘The romance on which I am embarking is adapted from the Greek. Give it your attention, dear reader, and it will delight you.’) This elaborate allusion is in the ‘spirit of buffoonery’ of Plautus,⁹ but also, I would argue, a literary statement. The *captatio benevolentiae* in Apuleius’ prologue recalls the conventional element of a Plautine prologue.¹⁰ The appeal to the audience to pay attention (for example *Amph.* 151 *adeste*, ‘pay attention!’) is regularly combined with valedictions, cf. for example *Poen.* 126, *Trin.* 22; although Apuleius’ ‘lector intende: laetaberis’ is not a valediction, it does have a similar feeling of closure to it. A certain politeness of the speaker in demanding the audience’s attention (*Capt.* 6, *Trin.* 5, *Poen.* 58; contrast *Poen.* 3–8, and cf. *Met.* 1.1 ‘praefamur veniam siquid exotici ac forensi <s> sermonis rudis locutor offendero’ ‘I beg your indulgence for any mistakes which I make as a novice in the foreign language in use at the Roman bar’) is often linked with a promise of enjoyment (*Asin.* 13f. ‘inest lepus ludusque in hac comoedia, | ridicula res est, date benigne operam mihi’ (‘This comedy is full of charm and sport. The situation is funny, please be attentive.’)).

Furthermore, Apuleius is the first to translate this Greek novel into Latin and he uses a similar technique to Plautus who rendered his Greek sources into Latin plays by stressing the Greekness of the plot whilst simultaneously describing it in Latin.¹¹

The stance of the *prologus* in declaring himself a *rudis locutor* who had to learn the Latin language painstakingly because of his Grecian origin, despite the high quality of the Latin Apuleius employs, may also be paralleled from comedy, where Plautus enjoys the interplay of a Greek play rendered into Latin by a Roman playwright. Plautus mockingly calls the Latin rendering ‘barbaric’¹² in ‘Maccus vortit barbare’, which indeed is non-Greek and in the

⁸ On *Graecanicam* cf. now Keulen (2003a: 20f.) (with further literature).

⁹ Smith (1972: 517 = 1999: 198).

¹⁰ The prologue of the *Asinaria*, and the delayed prologue of *Mil.* 79–83 both feature addresses to the audience including a *captatio benevolentiae*. Cf. *Merc.* 14f., *Trin.* 11, *Asin.* 4.

¹¹ Cf. Winkler (1985: 184), who argues that this phrase means ‘having Greek characters and setting but presented to a Latin audience’, like the plays of Plautus.

¹² Lodge (1904–33: s.v. *barbarus*): ‘semper fere de Italia, Italis’. (‘almost always used about Italy and Italians’). Cf. the repeated puns on *pergraecari* (‘to do things the Greek way’) e.g. *Men.* 11 ‘hoc argumentum graecissat’ (‘this story has a Greek air’); cf. also *Poen.* 603, *Bacch.* 813, *Most.* 22 etc.

language of the *barbaroi*. A Latin author thus mockingly disparages his own language and favours the Greek as non-barbaric, although he may be a master of wordplay and puns in Latin.¹³

The Italian Renaissance scholar Coluccio Salutati, owner and writer of marginalia in the Apuleian manuscript BM Harley 4838 from c.1370, sets the prologue into iambics and comments on Apuleius that 'hic enim auctor comicus fuit' ('for he was a comic writer'). The debate about the comicality of the prologue is an old one, with Renaissance scholars concentrating on rewriting the prologue into iambic senarii, which implies their having accepted the prologue's comic character.¹⁴ Similarly, Beroaldus in his neo-Platonic commentary on the *Metamorphoses* (1501) assumes that the prologue was written in iambic senarii.¹⁵

It may be seen that Apuleius follows a similar agenda to that of Plautus in turning his own subject into Latin and into his very own novel: 'Like the Plautine prologus he drums up interest in the story, makes a pointed reference to its exotic origin, and promises a reward to those who listen carefully.'¹⁶ Thus it is very appropriate that he uses the imagery of Plautine prologues to start his own adaptation of Greek literature.

The similarity between the different types of prologue can be traced also in verbal parallels. The abrupt beginning, taken as if from mid-conversation ('at ego tibi ... conseram', ('what I should like to do is to weave together ...')) has some parallels in comedy. Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* certainly (starting mid-conversation with 'Ἀλλὰ') and Menander's *Eunouchos* ('Ἀλλὰ τί ποιήσω;', ('But what shall I do?')),¹⁷ possibly imitated in Ter. *Eun.* 46 'Quid igitur faciam?' ('What am I to do, then?'), quite feasibly started similarly abruptly. There are, however, several persons on stage, and the comedy starts in the middle of their conversation, rather than offering a dialogue between prologue speaker and audience.¹⁸ Although this feature is neither purely comic, nor a defining feature of a comic prologue, it strengthens the overall comic texture of the prologue.

¹³ On the meaning of *rudis locutor* and the convention of non-native speakers apologizing for their command of Latin in prologues cf. Harrison and Winterbottom (2001: 14).

¹⁴ Harrison (1990a: 509 n. 7); For Salutati's ensuing influence on the Renaissance reception of Apuleius' Prologue cf. May (2006).

¹⁵ Cf. Carver (2001) for more examples.

¹⁶ Smith (1972: 520 = 1999: 201)—*Plautinisches im Plautus* has been magisterially analysed by Fraenkel (1922) and (1960).

¹⁷ K.-A. vi.2 fr. 137, with bibliography on the abrupt beginning of the play.

¹⁸ Cf. Plaut. *Stich.* 579, where a conversation begun off-stage continues on-stage with 'sed ita ut occepi narrare vobis' ('but as I had begun to tell you.'). Callebat (1998: 240) sees comic features in the use of the *dativus ethicus* and the confusion of *hic* and *ille*.

Apuleius' prologus asks suddenly 'quis ille? paucis accipe' ('Who is the narrator? Let me briefly explain'), which both in phrasing and in the notion of interaction with a fictional interlocutor imitates comedy.¹⁹ The prologue speakers may anticipate a question from the crowd while they try to identify themselves, which may be recalled in Apuleius' *quis ille?* ('Who is the narrator?'), cf. *Cas.* 67f., *Capt.* 10f., *Amph.* 52, *Truc.* 4ff. Even the reference to *paucis* is paralleled: *Aul.* 1 ('ne quis miretur qui sim, paucis eloquar', 'So that no one may wonder who I am, let me explain briefly'), *Capt.* 53, *Men.* 6. The crucial difference, however, is that Apuleius' *prologus* does not continue by stating explicitly who the speaker is, as a *prologus* in Plautus usually would. Apuleius' prologue is not simply copying a comic prologue, but plays with its conventions.

Slater (2001: 218) seems to be going down the wrong path in pointing out that Apuleius' *quis ille?* is different from a theatrical question, though phrased similarly:

The model of the theatrical prologue may be so firmly in our minds as scholarly readers that we fail to see the significant differences here: a prologue speaker on stage may choose to acknowledge interruptions or queries from the audience, but the audience responses are not explicitly scripted.

Slater ignores the fact that this is a stage convention, and the reaction of the audience may not be at all like the one the prologue speaker describes, when he pretends to react to audience interventions. The interaction in comedy between prologus and projected audience is as fictional as the supposed reader's question *quis ille?* posed by the text itself. The reactions in Plautus, too, are not real, but scripted fiction. Apuleius is here following a literary convention, conscious of its fictionality.

Winkler argues convincingly that²⁰

that transition from introducer of a tale to actor *in* the tale is familiar from the prologues of Plautus, in which the leader of the troupe (*dux gregis*) addresses the audience, often with jokes about identity, in a lively, dialogic manner. The same introducer then disappears into the world of the play, reappearing as one of the characters.

¹⁹ Cf. Winkler (1985: 195 n. 25), also for further parallels in comedy, e.g. *Amph.* 50–3; *Cas.* 67–78, diatribe (Hor. *Sat.* 1.3.19f.) and epistolography (Marcus Aurelius to Fronto in Haines (1919–20: i.18)). Winterbottom in Harrison and Winterbottom (2001: 9) suggests *qui sim* in the apparatus criticus, but I see no need to digress from the transmitted text here.—On verbal reminiscences of Terence: Harrauer and Römer (1985). For *accipere* with indirect question cf. Plaut. *Trin.* 11ff. (cf. Keulen (2003a: 70)).

²⁰ Winkler (1985: 200f.).

His collection of Plautine parallels for the Apuleian prologue is nearly exhaustive and fully establishes the confusion of identities between *prologus* and actor as comic.²¹

The *prologus* may speak of himself as one of the actors²², but he is not the author, who is mentioned in the third person.²³ In *Merc.* 1f. the double personality of the *prologus* and one of the characters is evident. Palaestrio in *Miles Gloriosus* and Mercurius in *Amphitruo* (53ff.) both give the *argumentum* and explain their role in the subsequent play, and consequently fall in and out of their respective roles as prologue-speaker and character within the play constantly, so that the *personae* are intrinsically mixed up by this metatheatrical ploy. In Apuleius' prologue, too, the person of the prologue-speaker seems to fluctuate between different personalities.

Winkler also draws attention to the use of the word *imago* ('image'), but in a misleading way: 'in Plautine prologues, the parts the actors will play are called *imagines* that they will put on.'²⁴ *Imago* does not mean mask or role in the theatrical sense, but is an indication of a certain sort of trickery in the play, namely the assumption of false personalities.²⁵ It is used in Plautus whenever a character pretends to be someone else: for example Jupiter pretending to be Amphitruo at *Amph.* 121, 124, 141; Tyndarus and Philocrates exchanging the roles of slave and master at *Capt.* 39; Philocomasium pretending to be her own (fictitious) twin sister at *Mil.* 150f. Thus I would argue that Apuleius' 'in alias imagines' ('into alien forms'), in addition to the obvious parallel to the prologue of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, may indicate the transformation of the main actor Lucius into a donkey, which he is for the better part of the story for all other participants of the plot. If there is anything in Winkler's idea at all, the word *imago* in comedy is a quasi-metatheatrical reference to a play within a play, to a character fooling others within the play by taking on a fake personality. There may be a parallel to the man hiding behind the image of the donkey, but if so the parallel is not very pronounced.²⁶

Amphitruo is an interesting parallel since this play also involves the change (metamorphosis) of *imagines*, cf. 'in Amphitruonis vertit sese imaginem' ('he has turned himself into the very image of Amphitruo'; *Amph.* 121; cf. 124, 141), as well as Mercury's announcement that he is bringing an old tale in new style (*Amph.* 116–19), and thus deserves a closer look.

²¹ Winkler (1985: 201–3).

²² *Asin.* 3, *Capt.* 61f., *Poen.* 4, *Truc.* 9f.

²³ Cf. *Men.* 3. There might be a signal, as the *prologus* says he is going to change his gear to act a different role (*Poen.* 122, 126), but it is not necessarily present; nor is it present in Apuleius.

²⁴ Winkler (1985: 202).

²⁵ On the metatheatricality of *imago* cf. Moore (1998: 73).

²⁶ The sole fragment preserved of Laberius' *Imago* (Bonaria (1955–6: Fr. 67)) is too small to indicate anything of its content.

Mercury is at the same time a character within the play and the person who speaks the prologue, with several metatheatrical references to this being a play (and as a tragicomedy a very unusual one!) in which he only plays a role. The identity of the *prologus* of the *Metamorphoses* is so indeterminate because he, too, tries to straddle two roles of the prologue-speaker at the same time, that of the *actor* and of the *auctor*. Like Mercury, who offers a deal to the audience and promises them good business profits in exchange for their undivided attention (cf. ll. 1–16), Apuleius' *prologus* wants the readers to admire his novel and pay close attention to it, and offers them pleasure in return.

Harrison's objections to this identification of the Apuleian with a Plautine prologue are based on generic observations:²⁷ since this is not a comedy, the prologue-speaker is not an expected character on the stage of the novel, and his leave-taking, that is, the change of speaker from the *prologus* to Lucius the narrator in *Met.* 1.2, would have to be more marked or so Harrison argues, as in a comedy, where the change is indicated through the exit of the *prologus*. This exit of the *prologus*, however, does not always terminate the prologue; in *Miles* and in *Amphitruo* the *prologus* remains on stage and seamlessly slips into his *persona* as a character of the play, who then seems no longer aware of just having given a prologue to a play. *Amphitruo* in particular, with its paratragic appearance and *deus ex machina* ending, will be taken as a very close parallel to Apuleius' procedure in the *Metamorphoses*.²⁸

Despite some differences, the prologue can thus be safely seen as pointing towards a comic texture of the novel. Since this is the place in the novel where the genre and theme are supposed to be stated, the start with its comic intertext firmly directs the reader's attention towards expecting an interplay with comedy in certain crucial portions of the novel.

5.3. COMEDY IN PROSE: COMIC ELEMENTS OF THE NARRATIVE TEXTURE

The presence of a comic-type prologue is not the only intrusion of a comic character into the narrative. The narrator is often present in the work, for example by focalizing through the employment of adjectives;²⁹ or by parentheses, for example *Met.* 8.1 'venit quidam iuvenis e proxima civitate—ut quidem mihi videbatur unus ex famulis Charites' ('a young man arrived from the neighbouring city. I assumed that he was one of the servants

²⁷ Harrison (1990a: 508).

²⁸ Cf. Ch. 9.5 below.

²⁹ Callebat (1968: 458ff.).

of Charite'),³⁰ and he communicates constantly with the reader. Such communication may function as introducing necessary background information, or sometimes as an ironic note, for example in the dramatic irony caused by one of the two cooks stating parenthetically that the ass cannot be responsible for the disappearing food in *Met.* 10.15. The interchanges between the narrator and his readers deserve analysis, since the use of irony may be Plautine.³¹

The employment of adjectives specifically derived from comedy give the language not only an archaic ring, but also a Plautine context,³² for example *diutine* ('over a long time'), a rare form found in Plaut. *Rud.* 1341 and *Met.* 2.15 'haec Milone diutine sermocinante' ('while Milo was giving us this long rigmarole'), in a scene which, as will be argued in Chapter 7, has a comic subtext. They add to other, more obvious, comic elements in the narrative.

'Metatheatrical' Appeals to the Reader

Given that the appeal to the reader in the prologue has some comic connotations, it is worth analysing whether other, similar, appeals to the *lector* may also be taken as comic.

Smith points out that the narrator does not leave the story entirely after the prologue, but returns occasionally to comment on the story his hero Lucius has to go through.³³ Such comments as, for example, *bellam fabellam* (*Met.* 6.25) on the intricate story of *Cupid and Psyche*, describing it as 'a pretty story' without much meaning to him, show how unreliable the narrator really is: this story is the *mise en abyme*³⁴ of the *Metamorphoses*, reflecting major themes of the novel, and the narrator does not realize that this is his own story. Similarly, even generic references in the *Metamorphoses* uttered by the narrator may be misleading:

Even when Lucius does attempt to be more precise in categorizing the tales, his prefatory comments are of only minimal help to the reader. Thus, at the start of the Wicked Stepmother tale (10.2–12) we are told to take off our comic slippers and to put on the tragic buskin.³⁵

Thus at several instances of the novel the narrator comments, misleadingly, on the genre and nature of the story to his readers. The narrator in the second example points out in advance what is going to happen, by alluding to a particular genre with certain closural expectations. But these expectations are

³⁰ Further examples: Callebat (1968: 462ff.).

³¹ Callebat (1968: 467).

³² Callebat (1968: 485).

³³ Smith (1972: 520–6 = 1999: 201–7).

³⁴ For the term cf. Dällenbach (1989).

³⁵ Smith (1972: 522 = 1999: 204).

thoroughly thwarted as the plot unfolds, which results in the readers' awareness of the continuous metamorphosis of the narrative. This concept of misleading through the narrator is also a comic element, distancing the reader from the character of the narrator, and forcing the reader not to rely on the narrator's voice excessively, but to consider the narrator as much a character within the action as the other characters in the novel described by him. Comparing the *Metamorphoses* with *Tristram Shandy* in terms of alienation processes, Smith claims that

both authors, for example, borrow the comic dramatists' trick (of which ancient dramatists are so fond) of temporarily shattering the dramatic mood by claiming to anticipate some interest or objection on the part of the audience.³⁶

Apuleius breaks the illusion, by occasionally letting his narrator comment on the narrative of the donkey.³⁷ Zimmerman analyses the different types of addressee.³⁸ Not unlike Plautus' metatheatrical games, such as addresses to his audience, Apuleius lets his narrator suddenly address the reader and continues to do this after the prologue, when direct appeals by the narrator to the readers are rare, but still noticeable.³⁹ These characterized fictive readers, are, I would argue, in some respects parallel to the audience appealed to by Plautus, and such readers are invited to enjoy and read the novel in similar terms to Plautus' audience watching his plays.

A stylized and common appeal to the reader is the direct address in *ekphraseis*, elaborate descriptions, in which the reader is invited to judge the art of the narrator and his descriptive skill.⁴⁰ This conventional *ekphrasis* technique also stresses the visuality of Apuleius' prose. The novel, again and again, appeals to the imagination; the readers are to visualize the scenes. Thus Apuleius blurs the boundaries between the novel and dramatic performances.

The reader, not unlike the spectator of a drama, knows more than the participating characters, partly because he has seen all of them interacting and thus knows more than the individual characters, partly because he also brings some outside knowledge to his reading that the characters within cannot

³⁶ Smith (1972: 527 = 1999: 208), refers to Ar. *Pax* 43ff.; Plaut. *Poen.* 550ff., *Stich.* 446f. More could be added.

³⁷ e.g. *Met.* 9.30 'sed forsitan lector scrupulosus reprehendens narratum meum sic argumentaberis' ('But perhaps, diligent reader, you will censure my version of events with an argument of this kind').

³⁸ Zimmerman (2001: 246ff.).—she defines Apuleius' characterized fictive reader as e.g. the reader characterized in the prologue, who is (p. 247) 'a member of the reading public of Aristides' 'Milesiaka' [...] having, as it were, a copy of the 'Milesiaka' under his arm: 'in that Milesian style' (*sermone isto Milesio*).'

³⁹ e.g. *Met.* 2.4, in an *ekphrasis*.

⁴⁰ Zimmerman (2001: 248f.).

possess;⁴¹ note, for example, Lucius' inability to grasp the true meaning of Byrrhena's statue or the famous *bella fabella* discussed above.

Ekphrasis appeals to the reader—for instance the descriptions of the statue in Byrrhena's atrium,⁴² women's hair,⁴³ or the robbers' cave,⁴⁴—but Apuleius in other passages guides his readers more directly by imposing demands on them, sometimes in the imperative.⁴⁵ At *Met.* 9.4 the reader is, as in the prologue, asked to pay attention to the following *fabula*: 'cognoscimus lepidam ... fabulam, quam vos etiam cognoscatis volo' ('we heard a witty story which I should like you too to hear'), and at *Met.* 9.14 the reader is manipulated into sharing the aesthetic evaluation of the situation with the narrator:

fabulam denique bonam prae ceteris, suave comptam, ad auris vestras afferre decrevi, et en occipio.

(I have decided to let you in on an outstandingly good and attractively elegant story, on which I now embark.)

This more directive approach to the reader, culminating in direct addresses with the title *lector scrupulosus* ('diligent reader'; 9.30)⁴⁶ or *lector optime* (10.2: 'iam ergo lector optime, scito te tragoediam, non fabulam legere et a socco ad coturnum ascendere' ('You should know, gentle reader, that you are now to read a tragedy and no mere *fabula*; you are to rise from the comic sock to the tragic buskin'; trans. adapted)), seems to occur in a deliberately more dramatic context, involving a dialogue between narrator and reader. The latter example is in a sense 'metatheatrical' in asking the *lector* to consider a

⁴¹ Rosati (1997: 113), and *passim* on dramatic irony in the novel.

⁴² *Met.* 2.4: 'eum [sc. latratum] putabis de faucibus lapidis exire [...]; putes ad cibum inde quaedam [sc. poma] ... posse decerpi [...]; si fontem ... pronus aspexeris, credes' ('you would think that [sc. barking] issued from those mouths of marble. [...] you could imagine that some [sc. apples] could be plucked for eating [...] If you bent low and gazed into the water [...] you would think ...').

⁴³ *Met.* 2.8: 'prima nostris luminibus occurrit [...]; si ... spoliaveris et ... nudaveris' ('it is the first feature to meet the eye [...] if you were to scalp ..., and thus rob her').

⁴⁴ *Met.* 4.6: 'faxo vos quoque, an mente etiam sensuque fuerim asinus, sedulo sentiat' [...]; ea tu bono certe meo periculo latronum dixeris atria' ('[I will] also enable you to measure carefully whether I was an ass in thought and feeling as well as in body. [...] You could call it—pardon the joke—the bandits' reception room').

⁴⁵ *Met.* 8.24: 'Scitote qualem' ('Let me outline his type'); *Met.* 8.28: 'specta denique quale caelesti providentia meritum reportaverit [...]; cerneret ... solum ... madescere' ('But now observe how divine providence repaid him as he deserved. [...] you could see the ground getting soaked').

⁴⁶ 'sed forsitan lector scrupulosus reprehendens narratum meum sic argumentaberis ... accipe igitur' ('But perhaps, diligent reader, you will censure my version of events with an argument of this kind ... listen then').

change of genre within the novel. The genre-marker *fabula* recurring in this context is important in itself and will be analysed below.

Similarly, in *Met.* 10.18 (the introduction of Thiasus), the situation of the prologue, and by implication a similar audience and a similar literary context, are evoked by a verbal echo in the question:⁴⁷ ‘sed prius est ut vobis, quod initio facere debueram, vel nunc saltem referam, quis ille vel unde fuerit’ (‘I must first tell you—in fact I should have mentioned it at the outset, but I’ll do it now—who the man was, and where he came from.’).

Plautine addresses to the audience work in a similar way: characters within the play utter commands to the audience, for example *Bacch.* 1072f.:

Sed, spectatores, vos nunc *ne miremini*
quod non triumpho

(But spectators, do not be surprised now that I do not triumph!)

Similarly, direct appeals to the audience, expressing the character’s wish as to how the audience should behave, are common, for example *Stich.* 673 ‘*Mirum videri nemini vestrum volo, spectatores*’ (‘I do not wish that any of you should be surprised, spectators’); cf. also *Met.* 10.33 ‘quid ergo miramini, vilissima capita, immo forensia pecora, immo vero togati vulturii?’ (‘You individuals who are the lowest form of life—I should call you rather sheep of courts, or more aptly still, vultures in togas—why are you amazed?’).⁴⁸

Some of the addresses directed at the audience create a fictitious audience. For example, *Merc.* 160 jokingly raises the fear that the *spectatores* may be asleep,⁴⁹ when the audience who is actually watching the play is unlikely to be so, nor can this be seen as an actor’s reaction to a ‘real’ happening in the audience, since it is firmly scripted in the text. It is as fictional and stylized as Apuleius’ addresses to a reader whose reactions may be unlike the reactions of an actual reader.

The cluster of addresses to the reader comes to a climax in Book 11, starting with *Met.* 11.3 ‘eius mirandam speciem ad vos . . . referre conitar’ (‘I shall try to acquaint you too with the detail of her wondrous appearance’), the beginning of the description of Isis, and continues with the lengthy appeal to the reader for understanding about not divulging what is happening in the mysteries (*Met.* 11.23):

⁴⁷ *Met.* 1.1 ‘Quis ille? Paucis accipe’ (‘Who is the narrator? Let me briefly explain.’)—followed by a geographical description.

⁴⁸ On the usage of *immo*, which is used much more frequently in the *Metamorphoses* than in other Apuleian works, and might indicate a conscious use of the language of comedy, cf. Callebat (1968: 327).

⁴⁹ ‘Dormientis spectatores metuis ne ex somno excites?’ (‘Are you afraid of rousing the spectators from their sleep?’).

quaeras forsitan satis anxie, studiose lector ... dicerem ... cognosceres ... nec te ... cruciabo ... audi ... crede ... ecce tibi rettuli quae, quamvis audita, ignores tamen necesse est.

(Perhaps the reader's interest is roused, and you are keen to enquire ... I would tell you ... ; you would be told ... I will not keep you long on tenterhooks ... So listen, and be sure to believe that what you hear is true. ... Notice, then.)

This is the conventional refusal to disclose the actual occurrences of the mysteries,⁵⁰ but also finds a linguistic parallel in the refusal of some characters in comedy to act out what is going to happen behind the scenes, e.g. *Cist.* 782, where the *caterva* or company asks the audience '*Ne expectetis, spectatores, dum illi huc ad vos exeant*' ('Do not wait, spectators, for them to come out here to you'), or 786 '*nunc quod ad vos, spectatores, reliquom relinquitur*' ('now as to the rest which is left to you, spectators').⁵¹ *Truc.* 482ff. Stratophanes asks '*Ne expectetis, spectatores, meas pugnas dum praedicem: | manibus duella praedicare soleo, haud in sermonibus*' ('Do not expect me, spectators, to tell you of my battles; I am used to tell of my battles with my hands, not with my words'), a similar appeal to the audience not to make him narrate events he is unwilling to—Apuleius probably knows this passage, since he quotes a passage only a few verses further on (*Truc.* 487 '*pluris est oculatus testis unus quam auriti decem decem*' ('one witness with good eyes is worth more than ten witnesses with good ears')) in *Flor.* 7.2. Both quotations from Plautus occur towards the end of the play, and are thus also structurally similar to Apul. *Met.* 11.23, enhancing its closural feel.

It seems that some of these means are used by Apuleius to evoke a theatrical context, to have his narrator communicate and interact with his readers in a similar way to Plautine characters with their audience. This intermittent address by the narrator to the 'reader' can be compared *mutatis mutandis* to Plautus' 'metatheatrical' addresses to his *spectatores*, turning them from a passive audience into almost a participant in the action.⁵² The comparison with Apuleius should throw some light on how Apuleius perceived the use of this element by his predecessor.

Common to the passages in Plautus is the breaking of the dramatic illusion through the speaker; thus the author reminds his audience that they are indeed watching a play. Apuleius, I would like to argue, uses the same technique to talk to his readers in the passages of his novel which are highly 'dramatic' in a wider sense, namely when he uses an increase of theatrical elements to construct his story. This Plautine breaking of theatrical illusion is the closest parallel for the diverse addresses to the reader in the novel. Not

⁵⁰ Griffiths (1975: ad loc.).

⁵¹ Cf. *Cas.* 1012.

⁵² Metatheatre in Plautus: conveniently Slater (1985: 118ff.); Averna (1983).

only can verbal parallels and echoes be found, but the function is similar, too. The Apuleian narrator reminds the readers constantly to step back from the action and to acknowledge the fictionality of the plot,⁵³ and he forges a camaraderie with the reader.

Furthermore, it gives the story a backbone of references to the theatre, and guides the reader along, together with several scenes based on comic stock scenes, towards a dramatic ending. The addresses to the reader and the internal audiences,⁵⁴ diverse from each other as the two types of audience may occasionally be, function as generic markers to indicate a dramatic plotline.

The intermittent address of the narrator to the reader can thus be likened to Plautine metatheatricality; the breaking of the dramatic illusion in comedy is comparable to the direct appeals to the readers, and just as fictitious.

Theatrical and stage terms

The inclusion of stage terms in a non-dramatic context is a technique employed also by other novelists cf. for example the analyses by Walden (1894) and Paulsen (1992) on Heliodorus. The specifically 'dramatic' meaning of these phrases is still present, and the reader is invited to see the fate of the main participants in Heliodorus' novel as a 'tragic' event, which could happen in a classical drama by Euripides, while comic elements are set against this in order to throw the suffering of the main characters into relief.

The following section discusses some specific stage terms used metaphorically in the *Metamorphoses*.⁵⁵ Terms like *chorus*⁵⁶ or *scaena* 'stage; backdrop to the stage',⁵⁷ obvious stage terms, are also occasionally used in a

⁵³ In other genres, such as historiography or oratory, appeals to the audience are found, too. These genres, however, are not fictional. Ovid occasionally features addresses to his readers, but in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* they remain primarily on the level of an internal speaker addressing an internal audience (cf. the Myrrha episode Ov. *Met.* 10, where in fact it is Orpheus who is speaking), or are inspired by Hellenistic learnedness. Ov. *Met.* 1.400 and similar instances are not direct addresses to the reader. Direct appeals to the *lector* as in *Ars* 2.283 are still in the third person, and, just as the addresses in the exile poetry, explicable through the genre (didactic in the case of *Ars*, epistolary in the case of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*).

⁵⁴ Cf. Zimmerman (2001: 252 with n. 14) for a comprehensive list, including e.g. the framing of Aristomenes' tale (*Met.* 1.3 and 1.20), or the audience's reaction to the tale of Thelyphron (*Met.* 2.20).

⁵⁵ On the figurative use of some of these terms in Cicero cf. Wright (1931: 94–106).

⁵⁶ *chorus*: in *Met.* 2.8.19; 4.8.6; 4.31.16; 5.3.13; 5.15.6; 5.28.22; 6.19.21; 6.24.11; 8.26.4; 10.32.11; 10.34.5; 11.9.7.

⁵⁷ *scaena* can be used both of the stage and of non-dramatic spectacles: *Met.* 1.8.16; 2.28.21; 4.20.7; 4.26.6; 6.24.11; 6.27.17; 8.8.13; 8.8.28; 8.11.1; 8.29.26; 9.15.18; 9.27; etc. Many of these examples are, however, clearly dramatic or theatrical.

non-theatrical context. Plato, for example, uses *choros* as a metaphor for a group (*Euthd.* 279c, *R.* 490c, 560c, *Tht.* 173b etc.),⁵⁸ a method which Cicero, too, employs and Apuleius emulates. It does not always carry a primarily theatrical connotation, but Apuleius' frequent use of for example *scaena* contributes to the novel's theatricality. Here I will however concentrate on some selected instances of exclusively theatrical language in the *Metamorphoses*.

A *theatrum* is not only the main setting for the Risus Festival (*Met.* 3; cf. Ch. 8 below) and (in ring composition) for the planned scene with the ass and the murderess in Book 10; it is also the meeting place of the gods in *Cupid and Psyche* (*Met.* 6.16; 6.23.5), and it is found in the *Florida* (5.1; 5.3; 16.4; 16.54; 18.16). There the theatre is usually mentioned as the meeting place for the populations of North African cities, for example to listen to an orator's speeches or other events which typically share a performance character. The gods' theatre in *Cupid and Psyche*, however, is metaphorically important, since the tale consistently employs theatrical imagery,⁵⁹ and although the theatre may be used for other purposes in the second-century oratorical practice of Apuleius, he is still very conscious of the primary use of the theatre for performances of drama; he says so himself in *Flor.* 5.⁶⁰

Two technical terms of imperial theatre, *aulaeum* and *siparium*, two types of stage curtain,⁶¹ occur twice in the *Metamorphoses*, at 1.8 in a metaphorical context, and at 10.29 in the 'real' context of the pantomime. In the first instance, in the tale of Socrates, they are used by Aristomenes to exhort his friend Socrates to be less dramatic. Socrates has just described the witch Meroe in terms reminiscent of the witch Medea,⁶² when he is told: '*aulaeum tragicum dimoveto et siparium scaenicum complicato et cedo verbis communibus*' ('Ring down the tragic curtain, fold up the backcloth, and do please use the language of every day'). The imperatives have a comic ring,⁶³ and they complicate the audience's expectations that the story will end tragically, with the death of Socrates via witchcraft. The episode then shows a curious mixture of possible tragic (Medea, on a basic level, may be seen as a murderous witch, like Meroe) and comic references (the false death of Socrates, his companion's melodramatic address to his bed), and an unexpectedly tragic ending (cf. Ch. 6 below).

⁵⁸ Examples for this and other dramatic usage in a non-theatrical context in Tarrant (1955).

⁵⁹ Cf. Ch. 9 below. Millar (1981: 70) on the theatre as a meeting place in Greek cities.

⁶⁰ For text and translation cf. Ch. 3.4 above.

⁶¹ *Aulaeum*: large drop curtain; *siparium*: small curtain hiding parts of the stage facade: Beacham (1991: 171f.).

⁶² Heine (1962), on parallels to *lunam deducere* ('pulling down the moon').

⁶³ Comic resonance of this form of the imperative: Callebat (1968: 502f.).

At *Met.* 10.29 the command to remove the curtains is literally obeyed and in a real theatre, again in a potentially dramatic context, namely before the public display of the murderess-of-five and Lucius: 'aulaeo subducto et complicitis sipariis scaena disponitur' ('the curtain was raised, the backcloths were folded away, and the stage was set'). The reminiscence of the first instance might forebode evil and a tragic ending for Lucius, but again, as it will turn out, curiosity is created about the outcome of this particular drama.

The elevated shoe of the tragic actor, the *coturnus*, is several times used metonymically for the tragic genre in other works by Apuleius: at *Apol.* 37, Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus* has *coturnum facundiae* ('solemn style'); at *Flor.* 9.8 Apuleius claims his words are compared by his audience with tragic language: 'cum torno et coturno vero comparatis' ('you compare it with the products of the lathe or productions on the stage'); at *Flor.* 9 he claims to have written tragedies, again using this word. At *Met.* 10.2 it is misleadingly used to introduce a story which is at first sight inspired by the Phaedra tragedies,⁶⁴ and again, despite this tragic marker, the story will turn out not to have a tragic ending, but display some comic or even farcical elements.

Its companion in *Met.* 10.2 ('*scito te tragoediam, non fabulam legere et a socco ad coturnum ascendere*, ('*You should know ... that you are now to read a tragedy and no mere *fabula*; you are to rise from the comic sock to the tragic buskin*'; trans. adapted)) is the comic buskin, the *soccus*: used as a generic term for comedy, in *Flor.* 9, 16 and *Met.* 10.2, its only other occurrence is in the *anteludia* of the Isis procession (*Met.* 11.8) as the footwear of a man posing as a woman in a context which looks very much like a comic scenario.⁶⁵

Persona occurs several times in the *Metamorphoses*: at *Met.* 5.10 (one of Psyche's sisters: 'nec uxoris officiosam faciem, sed medicae laboriosam personam sustinens', ('I am [sc. the personification of] a slaving nursing attendant, not a dutiful wife')); at 8.2 ([sc. Thrasyllus] 'amici fidelissimi personam mentiebatur', ('he falsely played the role of the truest of friends')); at 11.30 ('Osiris non <in> alienam quampiam personam reformatus', ('he had not transformed himself into any other human shape')).

The word is also found at *Flor.* 16 (in the list of characteristics of Philemon's comedy), and at 16.18 'quoniam poeta optimus personam vitae deposuerit' ('since this excellent poet had laid aside his role in life'). Given that the whole passage elaborates on the trite parallelism between 'life' and 'play',⁶⁶ and *Flor.* 16 in general is on a statue for Apuleius, this passage may recall tomb reliefs and statues of a comic poet holding a mask in his hand (cf. the monuments in Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: i.253 s.v. 'Menander')). This supports the

⁶⁴ Cf. Ch. 11.2 below.

⁶⁵ Cf. Ch. 12.5 below.

⁶⁶ Cf. Hunink (2001: ad loc.).

idea that *persona* often has a theatrical connotation. In Apuleius *persona* sometimes has the notion of deceit, of hiding one's personality behind a mask. The reference to *persona* in connection with Psyche's sister in *Met.* 5 may also form an allusion to the different roles the sisters have to play.⁶⁷

The most important but also the most debatable term in this group is *fabula*. The word has a wide register, and doubtless Apuleius uses a large range of meanings connected with it. In the context of the *Met.* it has usually been taken by Apuleian scholars to mean a collection of stories or one single story, and does so quite often,⁶⁸ but it is also the generic term for drama,⁶⁹ a meaning, I would argue, it carries in the *Metamorphoses* as well, and perhaps more often than hitherto recognized.

It occurs in interesting clusters, sometimes not at all in one book, sometimes with a remarkable accumulation, for example ten times in Book 1, two instances of which are in the prologue ('variae fabulae; fabulam Graecanicam', ('different tales; romance ... adapted from the Greek')).⁷⁰ Hence the meaning of this word *fabula* (translated by Walsh as 'romance') is important, and the understanding of the genre it implies generates in part the reader's preconception in and after the prologue.

The last sentence of Book 1, moreover, is a reminiscence of a particular comic prologue, thus forming a neat ring composition with the prologue starting the novel and the book: *Met.* 1.26 'cenatus solis fabulis' ('I had dined on nothing but *fabulae*'; trans. adapted) recalls Plaut. *Poen.* 8 'qui non edistis, saturi fite fabulis' ('you who did not eat, will be filled up with plays'). Not only is the context of *fabula* thus set in the comic genre, but the mood for the rest of the novel, thus indicated, will also be comic. This is however neither the first nor the last instance in which Apuleius misleads his readers.

Most scholars refer to Quintilian (2.4.2) for the definition of *fabula*:

Narrationum, excepta qua in causis utimur, tres accepimus species: fabulam, quae versatur in tragoediis atque carminibus, non a veritate modo, sed etiam a forma veritatis remota; argumentum, quod falsum, sed vero simile comoediae fingunt, historiam, in qua gestae rei expositio.

(We accept that there are three kinds of Narrative, in addition to the one we use in pleadings: one is *fabula*, which is found in tragedies and poems, remote not only from truth, but also from the appearance of truth. Then there is *argumentum*, which comedies invent as false, but probable; and finally *historia*, in which is contained the exposition of actual events.)

⁶⁷ Cf. Frangoulidis (1994).

⁶⁸ Bitel (2001).

⁶⁹ Peter Brown in *OCD* s.v.

⁷⁰ *Met.* 1.1 (twice); 1.2; 1.4; 1.7; 1.13; 1.20 (twice); 1.26 (twice). *Met.* 2.1; 2.6; 2.12; 2.15; 2.20; 2.31. *Met.* 4.27; 4.30. *Met.* 5.31. *Met.* 6.23; 6.29. *Met.* 9.4; 9.14; 9.17; 9.23. *Met.* 10.2; 10.23; 10.33. *Met.* 11.20. ('cognitis scilicet fabulis meis' ('I suppose that they had heard the stories about me'), on the servants coming with his property from Hypata).

Thus for Quintilian *fabula* is fiction with no likeness to the truth, but associated with tragedies, *argumentum* does resemble the truth, but is associated with comedy (and later, in Macrobius, with the novel, too);⁷¹ both are fictitious.⁷²

Suetonius, Tacitus and, importantly, Gellius move on from this idea:⁷³ besides maintaining the meaning of (unbelievable) 'fictitious story' (for example Suet. *Nero* 6.4, Gell. *pr.* 10.12) or fable (about Aesopus: Gell. 2.29), *fabula* indicates drama in a generic way: Suet. *Poet.* 11 (Terence) uses it for comedy, at Tac. *Dial.* 3.4 it indicates tragedies. In Gellius the meaning is quite diverse, but *fabula* indicates comedy in the important Chapter 3.3 on Plautus and Naevius, at 3.16 it is used of Menander's *Plokion*, at 10.3 it very likely means comedy, at 13.23 it is used of Licinius Imbrix' comedies, while in *praefatio* 20 it even indicates Aristophanes. In 12.10 it is used for Atellan farce, and 11.10 for tragedy. In 6.5 *fabula* and *argumentum* are both used for tragedy. Apuleius' contemporaries thus use *fabula* often, although not exclusively, as a term to indicate the dramatic genres.

It is necessary to check how Apuleius uses the word in other works of his, mainly in the *Florida*, and in *Met.* 10.2, where *fabula* is definitely used in a generic statement. In *Met.* 10.2, admittedly rather late in the novel for a definition to be applied unquestioningly back to the prologue and to earlier instances of the word within the novel, but still the only instance in the novel where a definition of any kind is attempted, Apuleius writes, as previously discussed: 'scito te tragoediam, non fabulam, legere, et a socco ad coturnum ascendere'.⁷⁴ Here *fabula* is explicitly contrasted with tragedy and linked to *soccus*, the comic buskin. This indicates that in at least some instances in the novel Apuleius thinks of *fabula* as a generic term for a play, even comedy, and in the prologue this may well be the case, too. This is not to say that the meaning 'fictitious story' did not occur in Apuleius at all, but I would like to argue that this is not its only meaning. The word *fabula* with its combinatory

⁷¹ Macrobius: cf. Ch. 1.1 above. For the same idea cf. Cic. *Inv.* 1.27, where an *argumentum* is a *ficta res quae tamen fieri potuit*, thus comedy ('a fictitious thing which however can happen', Cicero quotes Ter. *Andr.* 51), and in *Rhet. Her.* 1.13 a *fabula* is more linked to tragedy, 'quae neque veras neque veri similes continet res' ('which contains neither true nor probable things'). Cicero quotes Pacuvius fr. 397 Ribbeck, Medea's chariot, or Hecuba's change into a dog as *fabula*, cf. Bitel (2001: 140), who however links up *fabula* with 'oral history'.

⁷² Tradition of *fabula* in and after Quintilian: Fick-Michel (1991: 22ff.); difference between a rhetorician's and a novelist's *fabula*: p. 26.

⁷³ Discussion: Fick-Michel (1991: 31f.).

⁷⁴ 'You should know . . . that you are now to read a tragedy and no mere *fabula*; you are to rise from the comic sock to the tragic buskin'; trans. adapted.

meaning of 'drama' and 'romance' is a particularly apt description for the kind of novel Apuleius is setting out to write.

In the *Florida*, the word occurs four times, namely *Flor.* 16.6 ('Philemon ... fabulas cum Menandro in scaenam dictavit', ('Philemon ... composed plays for the stage at the same time as Menander')); 16.10 '([Philemon] recitabat partem fabulae', ('he happened to be reciting part of a play')); 16.17 ('Philemonem ... iam domi veram fabulam consummasse', ('Philemon ... had concluded the real story at home')); 17.15 ('si fides fabulis, Orpheus exilio desolatus', ('for if the stories are true, Orpheus was left on his own in exile')). Of the four instances, three are obviously linked to drama, even comedy, and the last to either fictional narrative or tragedy, which reflects the similar findings for Gellius.

All these examples indicate that at the time of Apuleius' writing the word may refer to dramatic genres as well as to fictitious stories, and in a prologue in other respects quite closely adapted from the prologues of Plautine comedies, the reader is perhaps meant to think that *both* meanings, fictitious story *and* drama, may apply to the novel, or, in other words, that *fabula*, more often used in *Met.* 1 than in any other book in the novel, may point towards a comic intertext *within* a fictitious story.

It seems that in the second century AD the meaning of *fabula* tended towards an increased awareness of theatrical content, and in Apuleius the meaning of 'comedy' is favoured. This is not to say that all occurrences of the word necessarily imply a comic intertext,⁷⁵ but we may assume that often enough this particular meaning was the one that suggested itself to his readers. Thus, when the word *fabula* occurs twice in *Met.* 1.1, in a context including echoes of comedy, the reader is exhorted to accept the comic prologue at face value: Apuleius promises his readers the delight and laughter of a comic novel in the prologue, and he does this by using the comic genre and playing with his reader's expectations.

One instance in the prologue, *fabulam Graecanicam*, is also indicative of its 'comic' use, inasmuch as *Graecanicam* means 'adapted from the Greek', like Greek comedy rendered into Latin by Plautus. In Plautus, the word *fabula* very often, especially in metatheatrical contexts,⁷⁶ indicates comedy. Typical

⁷⁵ Fick-Michel (1991: 26–31) details other intertexts, such as *historia*, Platonic myth, *fabulae convivales*, Greek novels and Menippea: 33–43; she ultimately agrees (p. 32, on *Met.* 10.7): 'Tout indique, dans la forme et dans le ton, qu'il s'agit d'une *fabula*, mais le sujet et les revirements de l'intrigue l'apparentent à une pièce de théâtre, peut-être même à une comédie.'

⁷⁶ *Bacch.* 214, where the prologus calls the *Epidicus* a *fabula*; *Poen.* 551; *Pseud.* 720. Epilogue passages include *Capt.* 1029, *Cas.* 1006; *Most.* 1181; *Poen.* 1370; *Pseud.* 1334; *Rud.* 1421; *Truc.* 967: 'Veneris causa adplaudite: eius haec in tutelast fabula'. ('For the sake of Venus, applaud, for this comedy is under her protection.')

places for this meaning are the prologues of the plays, or the exhortations to spectators during the plays or at the end to applaud the actors. Prologue passages are for example *Amph.* 15 ‘ita huic facietis fabulae silentium’ (‘thus be silent for this play’); *Amph.* 94 ‘hanc fabulam, inquam, hic Iuppiter hodie ipse aget’ (‘I say, Jupiter himself will act in this play today’); *Asin.* 7, 10 ‘dicam: ... huic nomen Graece Onagros fabulae.’ (‘I shall tell you: ... The Greek name of this play is *Onagros*’).⁷⁷ This usage of the word *fabula* in the corresponding context in Plautine comedy may corroborate the presence of a strong comic subtext in Apuleius’ comic prologue, and in some of the other occurrences of the word throughout the *Metamorphoses* it may likewise mark a dramatic or even comic intertext.

5.4. CONCLUSION

The *Metamorphoses* starts with a comic prologue, shaped after Plautine models. This functions both as a statement of Apuleius’ method of adapting his Greek model and as a marker, an invitation to search for other comic intertexts throughout the novel. Other ‘metatheatrical’ elements in the novel include the address to the *lector studioso*, which recalls the comic *spectatores*. The reader is manipulated by the narrator just as the *prologus* in Plautus tries to entertain his audience and capture its benevolence. Stage terms occur in clusters, sometimes in a literal, sometimes in a metaphorical meaning, and also function as generic markers. The novel’s main narrative and some of its inset tales are thus characterized as ‘dramatic’ by nature. Finally, the word with which Apuleius himself classifies the genre of his novel, *fabula*, has dramatic connotations. All in all, these findings indicate a coherent dramatic subtext in the novel.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Capt.* 52, 54; *Cas.* 6, 8, 84; *Men.* 72; *Pseud.* 2; *Trin.* 16, 18, 21 etc.

The Drama of Aristomenes and Socrates

6.1. INTRODUCTION

Several studies in recent years have dealt with the theatricality of the inset tale of Aristomenes and Socrates, the first tale of the novel, told to Lucius by Aristomenes himself (*Met.* 1.5–20). Thus it sets the mood of theatricality for the whole novel after the prologue.¹

Aristomenes finds his friend Socrates (whom he believed to be dead) sitting by the wayside in Thessaly, filthy and in rags, complaining about the iniquities of Fortune and the witchcraft of the woman Meroe in Larissa, whose sexual favours and jealousies keep him enthralled against his wishes. Aristomenes persuades his friend to escape with him, and when they stay at an inn overnight, suddenly the door bursts open, and two women, both witches and one of them Meroe, come in. Aristomenes' bed is overturned, and he can only watch helplessly as they tear out Socrates' heart and replace it with a sponge. Aristomenes' frenzied attempt to escape is thwarted by an over-zealous doorkeeper who will not let him leave. After the witches have gone, Socrates miraculously wakes up because of the racket, unaware of the nocturnal interlude, and the friends leave together, seemingly unharmed by the nightmare, until Socrates bends over to drink from a river, the sponge falls out, and he expires. Aristomenes buries the body and in fear of his life becomes an exile in Aetolia.

Keulen² most recently stresses the visuality in the vocabulary from the very beginning, for example *Met.* 1.6.5 'miserum aerumnae spectaculum' ('the wretched sight [lit. 'spectacle'] of his hardships'). Many more studies

¹ The story includes several parodic elements (e.g. a *paraclausithyron*), but many of the comic moments, as we shall see, are derived specifically from the dramatic genre, either as paratragedy *per se*, or by parodying or inverting tragic elements. For a link between the story and mime cf. Perry (1929), who explains the inconsistencies of the plot as due to contamination from a mime or burlesque love story—a theory disproved by e.g. Mayrhofer (1975), who still however maintains the mimic elements.

² The latest is Keulen (2003b); some of the arguments are also found in his commentary (2003a).

concentrate on the obvious parallels between Socrates and Lucius,³ and Keulen (2003b) studies Socrates as Lucius' *alter ego* and 'programmatic anticipation' (p. 109) in terms of how both are narrators and storytellers. I will discuss the tale's theatricality as an introduction to Lucius' characterization (Ch. 7 below) and to the novel as a whole through spectacle and particularly drama, which will be influential in helping to define Lucius' character as partly derived from dramatic genres. Keulen primarily compares Apuleius' Socrates with the portrait of the philosopher in Aristophanes' *Clouds*⁴ and the Cynics. I will concentrate on some of the wider tragic and comic imagery linked with Socrates and Aristomenes.

6.2. DRAMATIC POSTURING

Technical terminology derived from the stage, an important element of the overall structure of the *Metamorphoses* 'as we have seen',⁵ is frequent in this tale. Furthermore, (non-dramatic) spectacles are the reasons why the characters find themselves in their predicament during this episode from its very start, thus turning the desire to watch a spectacle into cause and underlying principle of the tale, and introducing the imagery of the danger of spectacles,⁶ which is brought out much more clearly in Book 10 of the *Metamorphoses*, where Lucius is in danger of being eaten alive whilst being watched as part of a dramatic spectacle in a theatre.⁷

On his way from Macedonia to Larissa, Socrates goes to see a spectacle, which causes all his troubles: *Met.* 1.7 'qui dum voluptatem gladiatorii spectaculi satis famigerabilis consector in has aerumnas incidi' ('I have fallen into this misfortune through seeking a diversion at a celebrated gladiatorial show') and 'per transitum spectaculum obiturus' ('I intended to take in the show as I was passing through'). He is waylaid and finally ends up in the clutches of the witch Meroe.⁸ The scene is thus set for a general perception of

³ Cf. e.g. Walsh (1970: 177); Zurli (1986: 143).

⁴ On the problem of Apuleius' knowledge of Aristophanes cf. Ch. 8.8 below.

⁵ Cf. Ch. 5 above.

⁶ On spectacles in the *Metamorphoses* cf. Slater (2003).

⁷ Lucius endangers himself because of a spectacle: at *Met.* 1.4 the sword swallower induces him to swallow cheesecake and almost choke. A further parallel is that Socrates wants to see himself as a tragic victim of Fortuna, and Lucius later will become one.

⁸ On displacement of persons as a continuous motif of the *Metamorphoses* cf. Slater (2002). A similar event happens to Thelyphron: *Met.* 2.21, whose story shows a similar keenness to see a spectacle: 'Pupillus ego Miletu profectus ad spectaculum Olympicum' ('as a young lad I set out from Miletus to attend the Olympic games'). This kind of *spectaculum* is however, like Socrates' gladiatorial show, non-dramatic. Thelyphron offers another warning and anticipation of Lucius' fate.

spectacles throughout the novel as threatening and best avoided—a lesson which Lucius finally obeys at *Met.* 10.35 in escaping from the theatre in Corinth.

Socrates actually does not manage to see the spectacle he had set out to see. Instead, I would argue, he is to be seen as taking part in a dramatic spectacle rather than watching a non-dramatic one, since he is going to experience a farce in which he himself features as a main character.

Aristomenes and Socrates themselves employ dramatic language to define their situation. Most of the dramatic elements in Socrates' story derive from within the (frequent) dialogue, which enhances the impression of drama. Socrates' first scene on the stage of his life is described by Aristomenes as a *spectaculum* (*Met.* 1.6), anticipating Socrates' conscious self-stylization on tragic generic lines as a broken man in rags, indicating tragedy to come.⁹ Socrates' tragic theatricality induces Aristomenes to tell him to stop being so dramatic, 'aulaeum tragicum dimoveto et siparium scaenicum complicato et cedo verbis communibus' (*Met.* 1.8, 'Ring down the tragic curtain, fold up the backcloth, and do please use the language of every day').

The theatrical language is especially evident in the first exchange between the friends. The continuous reference to Fortuna¹⁰ in the tale is a notable example. At *Met.* 1.6.1 Aristomenes calls Socrates *Fortunae decermina*, ('one of Fortune's outcasts') and refers to the unfortunate state of Socrates' household (*domus infortunium*), which sounds tragic indeed, since it refers to the fall of a whole house.¹¹ Socrates agrees in blaming Fortuna,¹² calling himself at *Met.* 1.7.1 a monument to Fortuna herself: 'fruaturo Fortuna, quod fixit ipsa' ('let Fortune feast her eyes longer on me as the token [lit. 'trophy'] of her victory!').

Socrates' self-styled role as the protagonist of a tragedy goes along with his tragic style and elevated language: at *Met.* 1.7.5 he arouses pity with the tragic-rhetorical *me miserum* ('poor me');¹³ *infit* ('he began'), too, is archaizing and

⁹ Keulen (2003b) compares E. Or. 385–455. On Aristomenes the beggar as a comic figure cf. Bajoni (1990: 151f.).

¹⁰ On the importance of Fortuna for the *Metamorphoses* as a whole and its theatrical implications cf. Ch. 12. The vicissitudes of Fortune are a Cynic idea, but also a dramatic image, taken from Greek comedy in particular.

¹¹ I am not convinced by Keulen's (2003a), (2003b) arguments for Socrates as a reminiscence of Plutarch's *The Superstitious Man* (δεισιδαιμων, p. 123ff.), or that the witches are figments of imagination.

¹² Cf. also *Met.* 1.6.4 'ne tu fortunarum lubricas ambages et instabiles incursiones et reciprocas vicissitudines ignoras' ('it is clear that you are innocent of the treacherous twists and turns, the unsteady assaults and see-sawing changes our fortunes bring').

¹³ Cf. Enn. *scaen.* 180 Jocelyn (*Hecuba*), Pacuv. *trag.* 264 Ribbeck, Acc. *trag.* 346 Ribbeck etc., but *me miserum* is also found in comedy. Cf. Keulen (2003a: 24) with further refs. For epic and tragic intertexts in *Met.* 1.7 cf. Keulen (2003a: 157f.).

tragic. Seeing himself as a tragic protagonist, Socrates also uses a tragic gesture: when Aristomenes sees him for the first time, Socrates veils his head in shame (*Met.* 1.6) with a patchy cloak: 'sutili centunculo faciem suam iam dudum punicantem prae pudore obtexit ita ut ab umbilico pube tenus cetera corporis renudaret' ('he drew his patched cloak over his face, which had been blushing with embarrassment all this time, with the result that he uncovered the rest of his body from the navel to his private parts'). This tragic gesture of veiling as an expression of grief and shame,¹⁴ befitting a man fallen in his fortunes, is however undercut by the unfortunate accompanying circumstances: since his cloak is rather short ('humi sedebat scissili palliastro semiamictus', ('he was sitting on the ground, only half-covered by a torn and dingy cloak'); *Met.* 1.6), he exposes his lower body to open view, resulting in an indecent and untragic exposure.¹⁵

This desire to see his situation through a tragic prism may also underlie his characterization of Meroe as a Medea-like figure; for example *Met.* 1.10: 'ut illa Medea unius dieculae a Creone impetratis indutiis totam eius domum filiamque cum ipso sene flammis coronalibus deusserat' ('You remember the case of Medea, who won a respite of a single short day from Creon, and ignited his whole house and daughter and the old man himself with flames which burst from the bridal crown?')¹⁶ The passage may contain an allusion to a tragic fragment, possibly by Ennius or Accius.¹⁷

Socrates, a man who has every intention of leaving his wife for a new life because he is in fear of her, implies that he is Jason to Meroe's Medea, the man she wants to punish for his desertion of her.¹⁸ This gives this episode an anticipatory tragic touch, whilst at the same time, since he is talking about an old innkeeper in a novel where hitherto nothing tragic has been seen in action, his fear of her power looks incongruous and comic. The tragic references are picked up, however, at *Met.* 1.13, when the witches compare themselves to the women in Euripides' *Bacchae* (1043–152) tearing Pentheus apart, using

¹⁴ Cf. Willink (1986: 132) on E. *Or.* 280 (with further references).

¹⁵ Cf. Keulen (2003a: ad loc.) for further references to tragedy represented by rags. On rags as part of ritual mourning cf. e.g. Gödde (2000: 38ff.).

¹⁶ The characterization as Medea is already introduced long before Meroe, in *Met.* 1.3, where a witch's abilities are listed in terms taken often enough from the description of Medea, cf. Keulen (2003a: 110f.). Callebat (1968: 377), comments on the extreme rarity of *diecula*, which is also attested in Plaut. *Pseud.* 503 and Ter. *Andr.* 710, as well as in Prudentius and Venantius Fortunatus.

¹⁷ Cf. Keulen (2003a: 209); Zimmerman et al. (2004: 490) on *dieculam* in *Met.* 6.16, and Mattiacci (1994: 60f.) on *Met.* 7.27, 'unam carnificinae meae dieculam donasset' ('he had granted me a stay of execution for one short day'), where *dieculam* appears again in the context of a reference to a tragic fragment referring to Medea's murder of Apsyrtus, either from Ennius or Accius: Cic. *Nat. Deor.* 3.67 = *Inc. Fab.* 165–171 Ribbeck (also recalled in Ov. *Trist.* 3.9.27).

¹⁸ For a similar point: Keulen (2003a: 208).

the expressive and unique word *bacchatim*: ‘At bona Panthia: “Quin igitur”, inquit “soror, hunc primum bacchatim discerpimus vel membris eius destinatis virilia desecamus?”’ (‘Then the kindly Panthia said: “Wouldn’t it be a good idea, then, sister, to deal with him first, to tear him to pieces as the frenzied Bacchants did, or to tie his legs together and cut off his manhood?”’).¹⁹

Finally, Aristomenes’ description of the witches ripping Socrates’ heart out recalls Senecan drama (*Met.* 1.13),²⁰ which also includes sacrificial scenes like this: Sen. *Thy.* 755ff., *Phoen.* 159ff. The witches are consistently linked to dangerous frenzied women from tragedy (*Medea*, *Bacchae*), and the incongruity of the assimilation of an old innkeeper to a tragic heroine shows the same kind of bourgeois appropriation that Socrates seems to display in his own case.

There is thus a strong tragic subtext in this tale, and what at first is presented as incongruous paratragedy by Socrates later turns out to be horribly correct.

6.3. WHAT KIND OF DRAMA?

There is a certain discrepancy in Meroe’s characterization. Characterized by Socrates as a malevolent tragic witch, but also (*Met.* 1.7) as an ‘anus scitula’ (‘an old woman, but attractive’), she may have some comic potential. The word *scitula* is Plautine²¹ and often used of attractive young girls.²² In one of the few Greek mimes of which we have enough material to reconstruct its plot and ending, the ‘Adulteress’ mime (*Moicheutria*, *P.Oxy.* III.413), the plot is close to tragedy, since a mistress of the house proposes to her slave, in a scene reminiscent of the Phaedra tragedies,²³ and there is an attempted murder out of jealousy, but it then has an ultimately happy ending for all sympathetic characters (although not for the mistress), since the death turns out to be false. Keulen (2003a: 39) compares Meroe to comic characters: ‘The old hag Meroe is a multi-faceted character herself, who recalls certain

¹⁹ *-im* adverbs abound in early Latin and colloquial sources. Cf. Karakasis (2005: 35).

²⁰ Cf. Keulen (2003a: 30, 247) and on *Met.* 1.13.6.

²¹ Plaut. *Rud.* 565 and 894 ‘forma scitula atque aetatula’ (‘with an attractive appearance and young’). Cf. Callebat (1968: 511).

²² For a quaint translation of *scitula* cf. Molt (1938) *ad Met.* 1.7 (p. 60): ‘id quod hodie Americana locutione dici solet “with sex-appeal.”’ Cf. also Callebat (1968: 511); Van Mal-Maeder (2001: 139), who also notes the occurrence of *scitulus* in Arnob. *Nat.* 5.6 and 5.31. Cf. also Ch. 7.3 below.

²³ Cf. Ch. 11.2 below.

stock types from the comic stage, such as the lecherous old crone and the cruel witch.²⁴

There is also a certain ambiguity in Socrates' garment. Rags are traditionally a symbol of tragedy,²⁵ rousing pity in the observer, but Socrates' coat is called *centunculus*, which is the traditional costume of the mime actor.²⁶ Keulen (2003a: 160) thinks this word is chosen by Apuleius to stress his character's fictionality, alluding to the proverbial expression *centonem sarcire* ('telling lies').²⁷ This is certainly the case in *Met.* 7.5, where the word *consarcinatis* actually appears together with *centunculis* in the description of what Haemus-Tlepolemus is wearing, who later turns out to have told a lie, but here *sarcire* does not appear in the text. Instead I would argue that the ambiguity of the coat adds to the notion of the openness of the dramatic genres in Apuleius: Socrates wishes to present himself as a tragic sufferer, in a tragic costume, but only manages to be a mime-actor, because his exposure accident is bathetic, and his terror is caused by awe of a jealous old woman, who has so far not been proven to have the powers of a witch. Fear of an angry wife is a comic stock scene (cf. for example Plautus, *Asinaria*), and, despite all his tragic posturing, Socrates wears the outfit of a *mimus*.

Furthermore, there is a similar situation, even with some possible verbal parallels, in Roman comedy. In Terence's *Eunuchus*, the parasite Gnatho tells a story in a monologue of how he meets a friend of his in the street (*Eun.* 232–64), and after showing him how to acquire food through sophisticated parasitical technique enrolls him as a student. The phrase *Eun.* 236f. 'video sentum squalidum aegrum, pannis annisque obsitum. "oh | quid istuc" inquam "ornatist?"' ('I see that he is bristly, squalid, ill, covered in rags and old in years. "Oh", I say, "what kind of dress is this?"') may even be referred to in Aristomenes' outburst at the sight of his old friend Socrates in *Met.* 1.6, who is similarly half-starved and scantily dressed: 'ecce Socraten contubernalem meum conspicio. Humi sedebat scissili palliastro semiamictus' ('Whom should I spy there but my old friend Socrates? He was sitting on the ground,

²⁴ Cf. Keulen (2003a: 110f.) on parallels (some of them from drama) for the witch's power in *Met.* 1.3. There are few witches in comedy, but cf. e.g. Webster (1974: 46) on Menander's *Thetalle*: 'women bringing down the moon, probably as a love charm.'

²⁵ Cf. Keulen (2003b: 118f.) for references. Keulen (2003a: 150): the cloak may be a comic representation of beggars as typical characters from tragedy, cf. *Ar. Ach.* 413, *Ra.* 842. For Apuleius' knowledge of Aristophanes and problems connected with this cf. Ch. 8.8 below.

²⁶ Cf. *Apol.* 13.7, with Hunink (1997: ad loc.).

²⁷ *Cento* means 'patchwork' and *centones sarcire* 'telling lies'; cf. Hijmans et al. (1981: 110), who also compare *Amph.* 367, *Capt.* 692, *Cas.* 95, *Pseud.* 353, 540. Keulen (2003b: 121) sees Socrates as a cunning and deliberate deceiver and teller of tales, and Socrates' appearance as 'a product of stagecraft instead of witchcraft [...] staging himself as a beggar in a theatrical play' (Keulen (2003b: 119)).

only half-covered by a torn and dingy cloak'), and whom he addresses in a similar way (still *Met.* 1.6): "*Hem,*" *inquam* "mi Socrates, *quid istud?* Quae facies?"' (*Good lord, Socrates, whatever is the matter? How ghastly you look.*). Gnatho's friend who has been abandoned by his friends and relatives is so miserable that he cannot even act as the entertainer at meals, the traditional way of making a living as a parasite: *Eun.* 245f.: 'at ego infelix neque ridiculus esse neque plagas pati | possum.' ('But poor me can neither act as a funny buffoon nor bear to be beaten.'). Socrates relates in *Met.* 1.7 how despair and hunger had driven him to accept Meroe's hospitality for the sake of a free meal—in comic language²⁸ ('me nimis quam humane tractare adorta cenae gratae atque gratuita ac mox urigine percita cubili suo applicat.' ('Her reaction was to treat me with extraordinary sympathy. She set me down without payment in front of a welcome supper, and then as she was feeling sexy she took me to her bed.')).

Finally, the command to the friend to follow is phrased in similar ways in both texts. After Gnatho has taken his friend to the market and has shown him how to get a proper dinner from the food sellers, namely by being invited to dinner, his friend is impressed and told to enrol as Gnatho's pupil: *Eun.* 262 [Gnatho speaking] 'sectari iussi' ('I ordered him to follow me as my student'). This may be recalled in Apuleius' 'effeci sequatur' (*Met.* 1.7.1, 'I induced him to accompany me'), when Socrates is taken to the baths to refresh himself.

The situation of Gnatho's friend, as destitute perhaps as Socrates, is treated lightheartedly and funnily, and with little reference to tragedy. Still, the situation is similar enough to have exerted some influence on Apuleius' description of Aristomenes' first encounter with Socrates.

This multiplicity of dramatic intertexts is a technique employed throughout Apuleius' novel to increase suspense and confuse the first-time reader: both through language and through set scenes tragedy, comedy, and mime are detectable, and the final outcome of the *fabula* is indeterminable at first. This 'dramatic simile of life'²⁹ indicates the random reversal of fortunes, and thus anticipates Lucius' drifting from one possible fate to another in his own *fabula*.

In *Met.* 1.6 Socrates' tragic histrionics are further undercut by Aristomenes' reaction, who uses comic words to point out that it is Socrates' own fault that he is in the situation he is in,³⁰ which, from Aristomenes' point of view, is not

²⁸ Cf. Callebat (1968: 532), who cites Plaut. *Capt.* 102 and *Most.* 511 as parallels for this use of *nimis quam*.

²⁹ Cf. Kokolakis (1960).

³⁰ Keulen (2003a), based on Bremmer (1992: 206), takes it that Apuleius is constantly alluding to the portrayal of Cynic philosophers in the characterization of Socrates. But cf. Tylawsky (2002) for the especially easy target comedy makes of Cynic philosophy in the characterization e.g. of the parasite.

tragic: a man pursued by a jealous woman is mimic, not tragic material, and Socrates is similarly undercut through his unfortunate self-exposure. The reader sees Socrates here focalized through the unbelieving eyes of Aristomenes, who considers Socrates' 'tragedy' as a farce. Aristomenes, too, notices the incongruity between Socrates' overly tragic language and gestures, and the low-life reality of his situation, and instructs him to be less dramatic, as we have seen (*Met.* 1.8). He is not convinced by Socrates' show and refuses to play the role his friend intended for him, that of a pitying audience inactively staring at the tableau of Socrates as the monument of Fortuna. For a first-time reader, Aristomenes reacts with bathetic good sense to Socrates' histrionics,³¹ by dragging him to an inn (*Met.* 1.7) and by using comic language: *Met.* 1.8.1 "Pol quidem tu dignus", inquam, "es extrema sustinere, si quid est tamen novissimo extremius, qui voluptatem Veneriam et scortum scorteum Lari et liberis praetulisti" ("Good lord!" I exclaimed. "You certainly deserve to suffer the worst possible fate, if there is anything worse than your recent experience, because you put the pleasures of sex and a leather-skinned whore before your home and children."").

The mild oath *pol* is comic and colloquial,³² and after Socrates' portrait of Meroe as a Medea, Aristomenes now describes her as a *scortum*, a prostitute and character from comedy, refusing to accept the situation as tragic as Socrates wants to portray it.³³ This is also anticipated by Socrates' description of her as a comic and lustful old woman, as 'anum sed admodum scitulum'³⁴ ('who was getting on in years, but was still quite attractive') in *Met.* 1.7.

The story as told by Aristomenes allows itself to be read through three genres, tragedy, comedy, and mime, with each of the two characters privileging one side (Socrates the tragic, Aristomenes the comic-mimic). As already seen, the language used by them is adequate for and expressive of their chosen genre. The story could develop in both directions and, as we have seen through Meroe's character and the coat Socrates is wearing, is open to ambiguous interpretation.

Only after the witches have visited their chamber at the inn is Aristomenes prepared to see them as the tragic furies that pursued his friend: *Met.* 1.19 'nocturnas etiam furias illas imaginanti' ('picturing again those Furies of the night'). Thus he agrees finally and belatedly to Socrates' tragic interpretation of his situation by associating the witches with a set of mythological and

³¹ Cf. Keulen (2003a: 185).

³² Cf. Bernhard (1927: 129f.).

³³ For another use of this rhetorical technique of a fleeting association of a character with diverse dramatic genres cf. Ch. 4 above.

³⁴ On some intertexts and models (folklore, magic, love elegy etc.) for the *anus scitula* cf. Zurli (1986), who offers primarily a narratological reading of the episode.

tragic characters³⁵ who take revenge on the man who has betrayed a woman old enough to be his mother.

Not only may the scene be inspired by a monologue from Terence and the *centunculus* perhaps function as a mimic marker, but at the same time tragic over-acting, protesting too much, is paratragic and comic.³⁶ Still, although Aristomenes finally accepts Socrates' tragic interpretation, most of the setting of the story in the inn is mimic, another discrepancy between Socrates' histrionics and the lower-class setting.³⁷

In Petronius 80.3, a scene probably referring to mimic intertexts, a similar situation of tragedy in an unsuitable location is played out, with Encolpius and Ascyltus brawling over the youth Giton, who throws himself between the two, 'ne Thebanum par humilis taberna spectaret' ('so that the humble inn should not watch something equal to a Theban duel'). The characters act tragically, wishing to allude to the tragic fate of Eteokles and Polyneikes, but due to their lack of social standing and heroic profile are in no position to be seen as tragic heroes. Their low-life realism comically undercuts their tragic histrionics.

The events in the inn thus may have some comic and mimic references. Keulen (2003a: 40) argues that, although Meroe is described by a more light-hearted Aristomenes as a *scortum* in *Met.* 1.8, she is not taking any money from Socrates. But she takes all his possessions to start with, and then dominates him completely, as a *meretrix* would her younger lover.³⁸ Adultery only rarely occurs in extant comedy, and certainly never adultery on the side of the woman. In its sexual explicitness the narrative goes far beyond anything known from Greek New or Roman Comedy, but such explicitness is not infrequent in mime,³⁹ and the scene of Meroe and Panthia breaking into the inn compares with a typical adultery mime scene, where, as it seems, often enough the cuckolded husband breaks in on the adulterous lovers through a door. Interestingly, Apuleius here inverts the roles, since it is the woman

³⁵ Cf. Aeschylus, *Eumenides*.—On comic mythological elements in the *Metamorphoses*. cf. Babo (2000), who argues for added functions within the novel as anticipatory or retrospective of Lucius' fate, cf. p. 486 with n. 7, and May (1998) for an essentially Plautine interpretation.

³⁶ On the paratragic tone of *Met.* 1.8.4–5 cf. Bajoni (1990).

³⁷ Cf. Panayotakis (1995: 110f.), cf. also Keulen (2003a: 39):

Socrates, Aristomenes and Meroe appear as theatrical types; their vicissitudes seem to recall typical situations from comedy and mime. We see stock situations and characters shimmering through the text, which the readers from Apuleius' time may have known from their own experiences in the theatre. The low setting of the inn [...] seems inspired by the comedy of low life.

At Petron. 80.3 the setting of the inn is possibly inspired by the so-called *fabulae tabernariae* (cf. Euanth. *De Com.* 4.1 for the term; on this comic genre see Beare (1964: 264–6); cf. Conte (1996: 79f.) (with further literature) on Petron. 80.3 and Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes*.

³⁸ Similarities can be seen to the negative characterization of the young girl in the *Apologia*, indicating this is a rhetorical technique. Cf. also Hughes (1997) for examples of Cicero's use of this technique.

³⁹ Cf. Fantham (1988: 156).

who breaks into the place where the man is hiding from her wrath. The more 'usual' way of doing things is shown, for example, in *Met.* 9.20, in a book full of echoes of the adultery mime (a complete subtype of mimes),⁴⁰ where the characters are usually not much individualized,⁴¹ and the women are unfaithful while their husbands happen upon them and their adulterous lovers.

These mimic references prevalent in the inn scene undercut tragedy from the very beginning, and suggest paratragedy rather than tragedy even at the start of the *fabula*. Any tragic elements in the inn scene are similarly undercut: for example the complaint of Meroe (*Met.* 1.12), her address to the sponge (*Met.* 1.13), Aristomenes speaking to himself (*Met.* 1.14) and to the bed (*Met.* 1.16) when he attempts a mock-tragic suicide. The collapse of the bed is comic, and so is the smell of urine which permeates the scene (for example, *Met.* 1.17).

This identification of mime as the prevalent intertext, combined with some comic details, but with tragedy as a persistent possibility for an alternative outcome, is essentially supported by its presentation through Aristomenes' retelling of the tale in a down-to-earth manner in *Met.* 1.7. The language is no longer tragic,⁴² and Aristomenes employs rare Plautine words,⁴³ resulting in a comic-bathetic focalization. The address to the *grabattulus* ('bed') may serve as an example.⁴⁴

The *grabattulus* in *Met.* 1.11 is a prop also found in mime (together with the door bolts).⁴⁵ The frenetic entry of the two women, too, breaking the door and toppling Aristomenes' bed over on top of him, may have parallels from mime, especially from adultery mimes, where the sudden opening of doors is a characteristic of the mime type.⁴⁶ Aristomenes' reaction, his hysterical

⁴⁰ For an analysis of mimes in *Met.* 9 cf. e.g. Kautzky (1989); Mattiacci (1996). For further literature cf. Finkelpearl and Schlam (2000/1: 162f.). On the adultery mime in general cf. Reynolds (1946). Cf. also McKeown (1979: 74) on the inversion of male and female roles in mime which is also detectable here.

⁴¹ For a typical adultery mime plot cf. e.g. *Iuv.* 6.41ff., where the characters are not individualized.

⁴² Cf. e.g. Keulen (2003a: 168) on *unctui*, *tersui* and further Plautine references.

⁴³ For example, *adlubentia* ('inclination') is found only here, but cf. *Asin.* 268 *Lubentia* (personification), *Mil.* 1004 *adlubescit* and *Stich.* 276 *lubentia*; in *Met.* 1.11, when Aristomenes describes his disbelief at the story, he also uses Plautine expressions: "Mira", inquam, "nec minus saeva, mi Socrates, memoras" ("This account of your experience", I rejoined, "is remarkable, and as harrowing as it is strange") recalls Plaut. *Amph.* 1105 'nimia mira memoras' ('you recount quite remarkable things'), 1117f.; *Epid.* 553 etc. *quampote* (*Met.* 1.11), ('the greatest possible'), although it is a conjecture, is a good emendation, and occurs before Apuleius only in Plaut. *Capt.* 398, *Truc.* 560. Cf. Keulen (2003a: 220).

⁴⁴ On the plurality of intertextuality in the address to the bed cf. Mattiacci (1993), who cites amongst other things prayer-parody, love elegy (*Ov. Her.* 10.55ff.) and the *paraclausithyron* (p. 266f.).

⁴⁵ 'Pessulisque firmatis', ('I closed and bolted the door'). Cf. van der Paardt (1971: 112) *ad* 3.12.2 *pessulis iniectis* for comic references. Cf. Preston (1915), Panayotakis (1995), 131 for beds in mime performances, and cf. Petron. *Sat.* 97 for a parallel scene, where a *grabattulus* is used as a hiding-place and as a prop for failed suicide.

⁴⁶ Cf. Petronius' Quartilla episode Petron. *Sat.* 16.2, with Panayotakis (1995: 36 n. 51).

laughing even at his own mishap, strikes a mimic note,⁴⁷ and when he calls this tableau ‘de Aristomene testudo factus’ (‘transformed from Aristomenes into a tortoise’), this gives a title to his own mime farce. The adulterer in *Met.* 9.26 is also turned into a tortoise in a scene reminiscent of the adultery mime: ‘ad instar testudinis alveum succubabat’ (‘[the lover who] was crouching under the tub like a tortoise’). Given that adultery mimes abound in scenes where a woman hides her lover, this may well be an allusion to this mime type. Similar titles or tableau-like images from mime are listed for example in Tert. *Apol.* 15.1 (‘Dianam flagellatam, et Iovis mortui testamentum recitatum, et tres Hercules famelicos inrisos’ (‘The Scourged Diana, The Recital of the Will of the Deceased Jupiter, and The Three Hungry Herculeses Ridiculed’); (cf. also Charite’s ‘tableau’ in *Met.* 6.29 ‘Asino vectore virgo regia fugiens captivitatem’ (‘A noble maiden escaping captivity on an ass’s back’)).⁴⁸

The address to the bed is also a set piece of tragedy in Sophocles’ *Trachiniae* (920–2), and in Euripides’ *Alcestis* (177–80) the address to the marriage bed as a symbol of marital unity is tragic. Tragedy also underlies Dido’s pathetic address to the bed she had shared with Aeneas (Verg. *Aen.* 4.648ff.).⁴⁹ Aristomenes’ address to his *grabattulus* is comic, too, since it is exaggerated and paratragic—it is not the faithful witness of a long marriage but a ramshackle bed in an inn (*Met.* 1.16), and the paratragic language again turns this into a comic scene. Whilst Aristomenes’ direct speech to the bed is tragic, the retelling of the story again undermines the tragic context with comic, Plautine words like *altrinsecus*.⁵⁰ A number of diminutives (*tigillo*,⁵¹ *funiculi*, *grabattulo*) indicate the low quality of the props, and although ‘ad exitium sublimatus’ (‘I then got off the floor ... to kill myself’; *Met.* 1.16) is tragic,⁵² it is juxtaposed with the comic ‘laqueum induo’ (‘inserting my head into the noose’; *Met.* 1.16), which recalls Plaut. *Cas.* 113 ‘proin tu te in laqueum induas’ (‘so you should stick your head into a noose’) and comic suicide threats.⁵³ As in comedy, the suicide will never happen, although Aristomenes gets close. What stops him is the bad quality of the rope; it breaks, and he tumbles on top of Socrates, who miraculously, in a kind of physical comedy at home in a mime, is woken up by the fall in a mimic subversion of tragic suicides. Tragic suicides never fail, but the motif of a

⁴⁷ Cf. Panayotakis (1995: *passim*) for the importance of the *mimicus risus* in mime.

⁴⁸ According to Griffith (1968) this sentence may derive from an iambic source. Sceptical: Hijmans et al. (1981: ad loc.).

⁴⁹ The bed is also addressed in elegy: Catull. 61.111; Prop. 2.15.2.

⁵⁰ Before Apuleius, it is attested only in Plautus, cf. van Mal-Maeder (2001: 281) on *Met.* 2.18, cf. also Callebat (1968: 240).

⁵¹ Cf. Callebat (1968: 34).

⁵² cf. Keulen (2003a: 284).

⁵³ Cf. Ch. 10.4 below.

false death (*Scheintodmotiv*) is found in both Greek novels and mime. The *Scheintod*, for an experienced audience of mime, is seemingly in keeping with the expectation set by the mime references.

The speech is tragic, but the situation (a man trying in vain to hang himself, which is the most shameful death conceivable) is incongruous, farcical, and thus comic,⁵⁴ although Aristomenes uses the tragic motif of the debate on the type of death:⁵⁵ 'de genere tumultuario mortis mecum deliberabam' ('[I] began to ponder my quickest mode of death'). This image is found in tragedy in earnest, and later in the *Metamorphoses* in a paratragic context. The low-life situation undercuts the characters' tragic ambitions.⁵⁶

6.4. CROSSING THE GENRES

Interestingly, after Socrates miraculously awakes, the two friends switch register completely, and a crossing over of dramatic genres takes place between them. Aristomenes, convinced now that his friend has been murdered, though confused by his apparently healthy appearance, remains in the (para-)tragic mode, whilst Socrates, who hitherto has been terrified and compared himself with a hapless figure from tragedy, suddenly switches over into comic mood and language.⁵⁷

Socrates' language and Aristomenes' situation are farcical indeed. After Socrates' (and Aristomenes') survival of the onslaught in the inn, the already miraculous happy ending is anticipated, as the usual outcome of mime seems to be positive and funny. The story, however, is not finished, but only ends with Socrates' final death beneath the plane tree. His tragic stance is vindicated at last: the witches were real, vengeful, and potentially tragic as he had said, and his tragic antics were justified.

This play with the genres allows the first story of the novel to play with assumptions about the conventional outcome of dramatic genres and thus have them overturned.⁵⁸ This playing with dramatic genres is sometimes

⁵⁴ Cf. also Petron. 94 for a very similar scene, which may also go back to mime (cf. Panayotakis (1995: 126ff.)).

⁵⁵ Cf. Fraenkel (1932 = 1964).

⁵⁶ Again, cf. Ch. 10.4 below.

⁵⁷ *Met.* 1.17 *apage* is comic (cf. Plaut. *Amph.* 580, with Callebat (1968: 498)), and the whole sentence *Met.* 1.17 is rather low and comic, drawing attention to Aristomenes' continuous stench, whilst at the same time this disturbingly offers a 'proof' for the reality of the witches' intrusion.—I will not go here into the problem of his status as a phantom or the witches' mouthpiece.

⁵⁸ Cf. Effe (1976) on the novelistic technique of the *Scheintod*: he shows that this kind of literary technique is not uncommon in the novel.

also the case in the more serious Greek novels, as has been shown for Heliodorus.⁵⁹ Apuleius, too, expresses the reversal of fortunes through the image of interchangeability of dramatic genres.

6.5. METATHEATRE AND METAFICTION⁶⁰

The *ianitor* breaking into the room and failing to grasp the situation (although presumably Aristomenes still has the rope around his neck!) is also a scene directly influenced by mime.⁶¹ The *ianitor*, who is called through Aristomenes' shouts to let him out, refers to himself (*Met.* 1.15) as 'nos curcurbitae caput non habemus, ut pro te moriamur' ('I'm not such a blockhead as to perish on your behalf'). *Cucurbita* ('pumpkin') is here, as Keulen (2003a: 270) notes, used metaphorically for a stupid man, as in Petron. 39.12, and linked with the *stupidus* in mime, the *mimus calvus*.⁶² The doorkeeper does not intend to draw attention to his lack of hair, but to the identification of a *cucurbita* with a stupid character from mime. The word is also used in *Met.* 5.9 for one of Psyche's sisters' husbands, in a comic context, where the complaining sister describes her husband as 'maritum ... dein cucurbita calviorem et quovis puero pusilliozem' ('a husband ... balder than a pumpkin as well, and he hasn't the virility of an infant'; trans. adapted). It clearly indicates a miserable, bald, and stupid man in all three instances.

⁵⁹ Cf. Walden (1894), Paulsen (1992), but neither stresses the *mixing* of dramatic genres in Heliodorus. For an example from Heliodorus cf. Ch. 11.4 below on Heliod. 7.6.

⁶⁰ 'Metatheatre' is a primarily Plautine technique, indicating that the character within a play is *aware* of the fact that he is within a play. Cf. e.g. Slater (1985) for examples. For 'metafiction' cf. Waugh (1984: 2): 'Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality.' As such it is comparable to Bakhtin's idea of the dialogic potential of the novel. I am using the term 'metafiction' in a slightly different way, indicating that the characters within the novel semi-consciously are aware of the fictionality of the plot and specifically its dramatic possibilities.

⁶¹ As Panayotakis (1995: 127f.) (who also compares Plautine situations) argues; both scenes may go back to the same mime source (thus also Walsh (1970: 31 with n. 1)). The *ianitor* uses Plautine language (e.g. 'ubi es tu, qui ... stertis involutus?' ('Where have you got to? ... now you are snoring in your blankets!')). Cf. Plaut. *Aul.* 268f. 'ubi tu es, quae deblateravisti iam vicinis omnibus | meae me filiae daturum dotem? Heus Staphyla, te voco.' ('Where are you, who have already been blabbing to all the neighbours that I am going to give a dowry to my daughter? Hey, Staphyla, it is you I am calling for!'). Keulen (2003a: 289) also sees a parallel to Ar. *Nu.* 11.

⁶² On the bald mime actor cf. Keulen (2003a: 339), Panayotakis (1995: pp. xviii and 141), Winkler (1985: 224ff. (on baldness in the *Metamorphoses*), p. 226 (on the bald mime actor)). The *ThLL* s.v. *cucurbita* lists Apuleius and Petronius as the only authors to employ the metaphorical meaning, but cf. also Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis* for a similar vegetable metaphor. Against the interpretation of stupidity in *Met.* 5.9 cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 170f. with references).

Cucurbita here may be used metatheatrically, in a similar way, I would suggest, as Plautus used references to stock characters and typical slave names within his plays, for example the slave Chrysalus in his famous statement ‘non mihi isti placent Parmenones, Syri’ (‘I do not like these Parmenones and Syruses’; *Bacch.* 649). The doorkeeper says he is not like the *stupidus* of mime, but he is bald, and he turns out, since he misreads the situation, to be not very clever, either. He does not seem to fulfil his role as a doorkeeper very well,⁶³ nor would the stupid *mimus calvus* in a similar mime situation—it seems that the role of the cuckolded husband was played by the *mimus calvus*. Thus by failing, mime-fashion, on all fronts, he seems to give a palpable hint at the genre he alludes to: mime.⁶⁴

6.6. CONCLUSION

After Aristomenes has finished his story of Socrates’ tragic death, the other travel companion gives his verdict (*Met.* 1.20: “‘nihil”, inquit, “hac fabula fabulosius, nihil isto mendacio absurdius”’ (‘I’ve never heard a taller story than this, nor a more stupid one than this tissue of lies’)), and everyone is entertained by ‘lepidae fabulae festivitate’ (‘with such an amusing and elegant tale’). The word *fabula* may carry the meaning that the story is fictitious.⁶⁵ Similarly, as we have seen, this kind of fictitiousness can also carry a theatrical connotation. Apuleius may be imitating Plautine phrases like *stultior stulto*⁶⁶ or *certo certius*,⁶⁷ and this kind of verbal repetition occurs primarily in Plautus, Catullus, and Apuleius.⁶⁸ Both *lepidus* and especially *festivitas* are terminology occasionally linked with comedy in Cicero⁶⁹ and Gellius, cf. Gell. 10.3.4 ‘brevitas sane et venustas et mundities orationis est, qualis haberi ferme in comoediarum festivitibus solet’ (‘Brevity there is, to be sure, grace, and a simple purity of expression, such as we sometimes have in the pleasantries of comedies’; trans. adapted).

⁶³ Cf. Keulen (2003a: 340 (with further references)) on the role-reversal.

⁶⁴ Keulen (2003b: 116ff.) (cf. also his commentary ad loc. p. 171ff.) emends the text in *Met.* 1.7.4 from *dicacitas timida* (‘unassuming wit’) to *dicacitas mimica*, an interesting suggestion, and, if accepted, another direct hint at the beginning of a mime-inspired section.

⁶⁵ Cf. Keulen (2003a: 332).

⁶⁶ ‘More stupid than stupid’; *Curc.* 551.

⁶⁷ ‘More certain than certain’, e.g. *Capt.* 644. It is possibly Plautine, cf. Callebaut (1968: 524).

⁶⁸ Cf. Keulen (2003a: ad loc.). Callebaut (1968: 524) attributes Apuleius’ use of this *figura* to his predilection for rhetoric, archaic authors, and especially the comic authors.

⁶⁹ Cf. Hughes (1997: 186f.) for the link between *festivitas* and comedy in Cicero’s oratory.

Socrates' fate starts as a tragedy in his own mind, and a short interlude of happiness in the inn results in his being butchered like a sacrificial victim in Senecan tragedy, as it were, 'on stage', only to continue with an apparent resurrection. Mime may have a mildly irrational and abrupt ending (cf. Cic. *Cael.* 65), after the escape of the characters from real punishment or harm, but the ultimate end of Apuleius' story goes full circle into tragedy. Socrates, just when he seems to have escaped from the witches' claws unharmed after his miraculous resurrection, switches into comic language, but ultimately dies. Even for Aristomenes there is no real happy ending—he is alive, but displaced, and the story, although somewhat dispassionately told, has uncomfortable undertones, with each genre undermining the other: we neither feel the genuine compassion of tragedy, nor laugh wholeheartedly at the unfolding mime. This novel version of drama creates something new out of the set pieces of dramatic scenes.

Both characters are aware of the rhetorical and dramatic possibilities offered by the situation; but in a novel like Apuleius' generic anticipation does not work, either for the characters or for the reader, nor does it dictate the outcome of the story. Socrates, I would argue, is trying to be tragic when he meets Aristomenes, just as for example Charite tries to be (as we shall see later), but he only achieves something incongruous and comic. Characters are semi-aware of their literary status, and hope to live up to expectations of the higher genre (tragedy) raised by themselves, but somehow they never quite manage to. This is a comic technique, effectively undercutting the tragic elements.

The episode, then, shows a curious mixture of possible tragic and comic references, and a tragic ending that we are no longer expecting. But Socrates' end shows that his intentions of portraying himself as a tragic character were justified after all. Still, the overall tone of the story is quite comic—even the horrible first 'death' of Socrates is overshadowed by the subsequent farce. This story sets the scene for the rest of the novel, which again and again stresses the interchangeability of different types of drama and the impossibility of any anticipation of the ending according to preconceived generic ideas.

A Parasite in a Comic Household

7.1. INTRODUCTION

As comic elements can be found in the linguistic texture of the *Metamorphoses* and in an inserted tale (that of Socrates), it remains to be seen whether or not comic characterization can also be traced in the main narrative, and the protagonist Lucius needs to be looked at in detail. If that is the case, then the concept of the *Metamorphoses* as a comic novel is strongly enhanced.

7.2. LUCIUS' COMIC CHARACTERIZATION: LUCIUS AS A PARASITE?

In the early books of the *Metamorphoses*, Lucius encounters several adventures before his metamorphosis within the context of a long business expedition to Thessaly (*Met.* 1.2); in Hypata he meets Milo, who has the reputation of being a miserly old moneylender (*Met.* 1.21), and who keeps only one slave girl. Milo is just about to dine when Lucius comes in (*Met.* 1.22: 'Intuli me eumque accubantem exiguo admodum grabattulo et commodum cenare incipientem invenio', ('When I made my way in, I found Milo reclining on quite a small couch, and on the point of starting his dinner')), and offers him a seat but no part in his meal, after sending his wife away. Lucius declines and decides to go to the market in order to provide himself with a fish dish (*Met.* 1.24f.). An over-eager aedile destroys Lucius' expensively bought dish, and Lucius has to return to his host without any food, where, instead of getting dinner, he has to entertain Milo and suffer his irritating table talk, before he can go to bed, still unfed (*Met.* 1.26).

It has been noted that some of the figures and scenes in the early books show Lucius as a kind of comic Telemachus on his initiatory journey.¹ Other

¹ Cf. Harrison (1990b): The literary allusion is used to characterize Lucius, and Apuleius manages this partly by using Homer directly, such as in the recognition scene by Byrrhena (*Met.* 2.2), which closely resembles *Od.* 4.141ff., partly by contrasting the behaviour of the curious and

literary allusions, however, can also be traced in the texture of the *Metamorphoses*.² The purpose of these pages is to show that some features of Apuleius' presentation of Lucius are reminiscent of the stock figure of the parasite as found in Roman comedy, specifically in Plautus, but also in the *Atellana*, and still traceable in mime. Lucius' character before, during and after his metamorphosis remains essentially the same,³ and the characteristics he displays in Book 10, shortly before his re-metamorphosis, that is voracity, inconstancy, and gullibility, are also found in the earlier books.

Lucius is once characterized for his voracity through a comparison with the *manduco* (or *manducus*), a gluttonous character with champing jaws from the *Atellana*. It occurs in *Met.* 6.31: 'de isto asino semper pigro quidem sed manducone summo' ('the ass here, which is always bone-idle, and the greatest *manduco*'; trans. adapted);⁴ this is an evocation of comic language; both mime and Plautus employ comparisons with the Atellan *manduco*.⁵ In general, it forms a good characterization of Lucius' voracious inclinations, although in this particular context it is rather the robbers who are voracious. Having just gobbled up a sumptuous meal (6.31: 'Ac dum avida voracitate cuncta contruncant' ('as they tucked into the entire spread with gluttonous greed')) without feeding either the captive Charite or the hungry donkey, they call him a *manduco*, thus offering another example of Apuleius' subtle ironies, considerably enhanced by a dramatic allusion.

During Books 9 and 10 the ass Lucius becomes the beast of burden of a *miles gloriosus* (cf. Ch. 11.3 below), who in comedy always has a parasite or sycophant as his sidekick: for example the flattering Artotrogus in *Miles Gloriosus* willingly does everything the soldier asks him to do for the sake of his hunger. When in *Met.* 10.16 Lucius is called Thiasus' parasite in a distinctly comic context,⁶ he is finally described as the character he has been displaying all through the preceding books:

impudent Lucius with that of the well-mannered Telemachus, or chaste Nausicaa with lusty Photis. Apuleius uses epic material, sometimes closely following his model, sometimes inverting it in a burlesque way.

² Feldbrugge (1939), based on an idea by Junghanns (1932), defines Lucius throughout the novel as the comic 'Pechvogel', someone who, despite all good efforts, only closely escapes death and misfortune in his tale.

³ Wlosok (1969=1999). Characterization in Apuleius: Smith (1994).

⁴ Cf. Pompon. *ap. Non.* 17.13, and Callebat (1968: 480) for the word being a conscious imitation of the language of comedy.

⁵ Cf. the similar use in *Rud.* 535 'Quid, si aliquo ad ludos me pro manduco locem?' ('What if I were to hire myself out at the games as a Manducus?'), cf. Sonnenschein (1891: ad loc.). Callebat (1968: 480) argues for a deliberate emulation of comedy through Apuleius. For similar usage of Atellan characters cf. *Apol.* 81.4.

⁶ May (1998: *passim*). *suffarcinare* (cf. *Met.* 9.8, 9.26, and 10.16), which also occurs here, is a comic word, cf. Karakasis (2005: 182).

[THIASUS] 'heus, ait, 'puer, lautum diligenter ecce illum aureum cantharum mulso contempera et offer *parasito meo*,'

([THIASUS] Hey, boy, take this gold beaker, and wash it well. Then mix in some wine and honey, and offer it to this self-invited guest of mine [lit. 'my parasite'].)

Even when re-metamorphosed into a human being again and undergoing his initiation into Isis' mysteries, Lucius still cracks the same parasitical jokes as before, indicating the lack of change in his nature.⁷

I shall try to establish that the characterization as a parasite is not always in the foreground of Lucius' presentation. Rather it is a means used to bring out certain character traits like his voracity and gullibility much more clearly than they had been in the Greek source, and it is interesting to see which additions Apuleius made, and from which literary genre they might derive.

Even after the heyday of comedy, the stock character of the parasite did not die out: Cicero used the notion of the parasite many times in his defences to deride his opponents, and Apuleius uses this technique, too, in the *Apologia*.⁸ So in the time of Apuleius, the stock figure is still so well known and sufficiently spread over several literary genres, that it could be used recognizably in a non-dramatic context.

Some of the characteristic features Lucius displays in Apuleius' story are also notable in the *Onos*, and they must belong to the lost original. Apuleius, when following the plot of his lost Greek original quite closely, has to adjust his adaptation to the mechanisms of the plot. Thus he cannot change any key scenes of the story, but he can give them a slightly comic flavour by adding references to comic language or stock scenes. Although comparison with the *Onos* is rather hazardous due to its nature as an epitome, there seems, as will be shown, to be no comparable intention in the Greek story to use comedy as a subtext of the narrative.

In order to compare the features of Lucius with those of the parasite, a short introduction to the long tradition in history of this comic stock character may be helpful. Tylawsky (2002) traces the character back to historical and literary hangers-on from the *Odyssey* onwards, and both she

⁷ Cf. *Met.* 11.23: 'decem continuis illis diebus cibariam voluptatem cohercerem neque ullum animal essem et invinius essem' ('to discipline my pleasures in eating for the ensuing ten days, taking no animal flesh and drinking no wine') recalls witty puns on *esse* 'to be' and 'to eat', as e.g. Caecilius 16 Ribbeck: *PARASITUS* 'nihilne nihil tibi esse quod edim?' ('*PARASITUS* what, you've got nothing, nothing for me to eat?'), and reinforces the idea that Lucius' parasitical character has essentially not changed. On gastronomical puns by Plautine parasites: Gowers (1993: 76).

⁸ Geffcken (1973: *passim*); Vasaly (1993: *passim*); Damon (1997: 195–251).—Apuleius derides his opponents as parasites e.g. in *Apol.* 100.4. Cf. Ch. 4. above. On the parasite in the Second Sophistic cf. Ch. 2.1 above.

and Nesselrath⁹ analyse the development of the *parasitos* and *kolax*¹⁰ on the Athenian stage. The character's main traits are to be a hungry parasite with a need to quench his hunger, and a demagogue and flatterer during Old¹¹ and early Middle Comedy. During Middle and New Comedy,¹² the parasite develops into a distinctly hungry character, whose poverty urges him to eat at the expense of others, but whose plans are sometimes thwarted, so that he gets nothing to eat at all or only very little.¹³

When Plautus adapts parasites in Roman comedy, they again take up the position of flatterers of their masters.¹⁴ Their main characteristic, however, is their interest in food, and speaking names, such as Artotrogus ('Breadmuncher') in the *Miles Gloriosus*, the eponymous Curculio ('Weevil'), or Peniculus ('Sponge') in the *Menaechmi* stress their readiness to do anything for the sake of eating, which becomes their main characteristic.¹⁵ This shift of stress for comic effect is mainly attributable to Plautus' invention.¹⁶ He exploits his stock characters mainly for their comic potential, and thus Plautus' parasites crave large amounts of food, but again, like their Greek analogues, their expectations are sometimes thwarted. So the parasite is too poor to provide his own dinners (*Capt.* 176ff., *Curc.* 144, *Persa* 120, *Stich.* 177), or only gets leftovers from his master's table, as in Plaut. *Curc.* 321, *Persa* 77–9, *Stich.* 231, 496, 594 etc.¹⁷

Another characteristic¹⁸ of the parasite in Greek comedy is that he comes to dinner uninvited; he will just appear at his host's house and show his entertainment abilities to earn his dinner. His Roman counterpart, however,

⁹ Tylawsky (2002), Damon (1997: 12f.); Nesselrath (1985: 88–121), (1990: 309ff.).

¹⁰ Ath. 6.236e. Cf. Corbett (1986: 5–26) on the parasite (but with untenable conclusions). —Already Epicharmus seems to have a parasite (fr. 34–6 Kaibel).

¹¹ Ar. *Eq.* 48; 869–911, *Ach.* 134ff., *V.* 418 etc.

¹² Damon (1997: 13): There is a dispute as to when the *parasitos* with his characteristic hunger is first distinguished from the *kolax*. Nesselrath (1985) takes Anaxandrides to be the first to make this distinction. Cf. also Tylawsky (2002: 13), who argues that the elegist Asios of Samos is the first to introduce the term *kolax*, and ead. Ch. 5 on Athenaios' discussion of the character.

¹³ Eagerness for food: Aristophon fr. 5.2ff. K.–A.; Dromon fr. 1 K.–A. etc. Thwarted expectations: cf. Axionicus. fr. 6.14 K.–A.; Aristophon fr. 10.14 K.–A. On the whole development cf. Lowe (1989: 162f. with nn.), Damon (1997: 25ff.).

¹⁴ Brown (1992: 99ff.) does not accept a clear distinction between the two characters in New and Roman Comedy.

¹⁵ References: Lowe (1989); especially hungry is e.g. Plautus' parasite Peniculus in *Men.* 77–225. Brown (1992: 98f.): 'The hallmark of the *parasitos* is his obsession with food; he may fawn and flatter in order to get it, but he has no further aim than to line his stomach.'

¹⁶ Lowe (1989: 161).

¹⁷ The list in Damon (1997: 27 n. 15) is misleading; she thinks that parasite meals mainly consist of leftovers, but Curculio e.g. gets a good meal during the play, and only wants to have a second course in *Curc.* 388, devouring the leftovers in addition to the extensive meal he had before Act III; also her interpretation of *Men.* 665 is distorted, owing to her argument that parasites represent the Roman client in fiction, thus allowing Plautus to make a social comment by his portrait of parasites.

¹⁸ Lucius in *Met.* 1.24 also brings his own bathing equipment with him. A flask (for a Roman audience) belongs to the things Greek young men of the world would take on their trip, cf. *Merc.*

needs an invitation to a *cena* to come inside;¹⁹ the conversation between Ergasilus and Hegio in *Capt.* 172–5 illustrates with its Plautine word games that the reference to a dinner invitation is an element of Plautine rather than Menandrian comedy:

ERGASILUS sed num quo foras
vocatus <es> ad cenam?—
HEGIO nusquam, quod sciam.
sed quid tu id quaeris?—
ERG. quia mihi est natalis dies;
propterea <a> te vocari ad te ad cenam volo.

(ERGASILUS But you have not been invited out to dinner?—HEGIO Nowhere, as far as I know. By why do you want to know this?—ERG. Because it is my birthday; therefore I want to be invited by you to dinner at your place.)

In most instances, the services of the parasite are indeed rewarded by a meal of some sort, but sometimes comically all the trouble taken by a parasite is in vain. Despite all his flattery of Menaechmus, Peniculus is unable to procure a meal for himself thanks to the comedy of errors between the twins (*Men.* 469ff.: ‘PENICULUS pallam ad phrygionem fert confecto prandio | vinoque expoto, parasito excluso foras’, (‘PENICULUS he brings that gown to the embroiderer, having eaten all the food and drunk all the wine, and having locked his parasite out’); and 666f.). Gelasimus, too, is thwarted in his several climactic attempts to get hold of food: cf. *Stich.* 388f., 465ff., 582ff., 624f. and especially 638–40, where the loss of the meal ends in Gelasimus’ threats to commit suicide; since acquiring food is the parasite’s sole purpose in life, his life is without meaning if he does not achieve this end:

numquam edepol me vivom quisquam in crastinum inspiciet
diem;
nam mihi iam intus potione iuncea onerabo gulam
neque ego hoc committam ut me esse homines mortuom
dicant fame.

922–8, cf. Tylawsky (2002: 107ff.). Bathing equipment as a prop for parasites features also in the description of the mask in Pollux nos. 17 and 18 (cf. Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: i.22ff.)), where the characteristic of the *kolax* and the parasite is that they are ‘μέλανες, οὐ μὴν ἕξω παλαίστρας’ (‘dark-skinned, but not more so than frequenters of the palaestra’). Elsewhere (4.120) Pollux states that ‘parasites carry a strigil and a lekythos’. Cf. also *Persa* 123ff.:

[SATURIO] cynicum esse egentem oportet parasitum probe:
ampullam, strigilem, scaphium, soccos, pallium,
marsupium habeat.

(SATURIO A parasite jolly well ought to be a poverty-stricken Cynic—he should have a flask, a strigil, a cup, (comic) shoes, a cloak, a purse.)

¹⁹ Damon (1997: 29, 59f.)—The only exception as an uninvited parasite in Roman comedy is Ergasilus (*Capt.* 1ff. with a pun on *invocatus*; l. 70), but his aim in this comedy is to achieve perpetual dinner invitations as the reward for his pains, which he in fact manages (ll. 176 and 897).

(By Pollux, no one ever will see me alive tomorrow, for as soon as I am indoors I will load my throat with a bulrush poison, and with this I will make sure that no man can say that I died of hunger!)

The parasite has to bear with his master's talk, even though it may be boring and meaningless, in order to earn his meal; cf. the parasite Artotrogus' self-denial in *Mil.* 21–4 and 33–5:

peiuiorem hoc hominem si quis viderit
aut gloriarum plenior quam illic est,
me sibi habeto, ego me mancupo dabo;
nisi unum, epityra estur insanum bene.

· · · · ·
venter creat omnis hasce aerumnas: auribus
peraudienda sunt, ne dentes dentiant,
et adsentandumst quidquid hic mentibitur.

(If anyone has ever seen a greater liar than this one here, or a greater braggart than he is, he can have me, I will give me to him to own me as a slave. But for one thing: his olive preserve is criminally good! [. . .] My belly creates all these troubles for me: I have to hear him out with my ears, so that my teeth have something to sink in, and I have to agree to whatever lies he tells!)

Once the parasite has achieved his end by procuring a free meal at his master's house, he settles up by entertaining him, or performing degrading services, and has to endure laughter at his own expense and bad treatment at the table,²⁰ as Lucius turned ass actually does in Book 10.

To return to Apuleius: it is noticeable that Lucius is much more obsessed with eating than his Greek counterpart, and also more of a flatterer. Even before he meets Milo, his very first speech, uttered to his yet unnamed travelling-companions (one of whom is Aristomenes, who tells Lucius the story discussed in the previous chapter) on his way to Hypata, serves to characterize him in two ways: on the one hand, his *curiositas* ('curiosity'), the *leitmotif* of the whole *Metamorphoses*, is introduced for the first time, but in addition to that, the very first thing he mentions is his choking on a cheesecake in a convivial context (*Met.* 1.4):²¹

Ego denique vespera, dum *polentae caseatae* modico secus offulam grandior *in convivas aemulus contruncare gestio*, mollitie cibi glutinosi faucibus inhaerentis et meacula spiritus distinentis minimo minus interii.

²⁰ Damon (1997: 29).

²¹ The commentaries (Scobie (1975), Molt (1938) ad loc.) concentrate on the fascinating act of sword-swallowing, but not on the cheesecake, except to note that cheesecake is a Greek rather than a Roman dish (Scobie).

(yesterday evening *I was trying to compete with fellow-guests in greedily bolting down a largish portion of cheesecake*. Because the stuff was so soft and sticky, it stuck in my throat and impeded my breathing so that I very nearly choked.)

Polenta caseata is the kind of food Plautine parasites favour and mention in their lists of food they would like to enjoy, cf. *mollem caseum* ('soft cheese') in *Capt.* 851 and *polenta* in *Curc.* 295; both quotations occur in food catalogues uttered by parasites.²² In Diphilus 45.3f. K.–A. (*Herakles*) the parasite devours large amounts of cheesecake. It is remarkable that Lucius chokes during a *cena* in a kind of eating-contest, which may be the kind of entertainment expected from voracious parasites at the dinner table, since eating and entertaining at meals are their job.

Indeed, Lucius' ability to devour large amounts of food untypical for an ass is considered as very entertaining by Thiasus' two cooks in Book 10, who because of this unusual activity consider the ass worth selling to their master. This enables the ass Lucius to be accepted literally as a parasite at Thiasus' table and he is finally called Thiasus' parasite (*Met.* 10.13ff.), where his understanding of entertainment is again more of the voracious kind as he devours large quantities of food.

In *Met.* 1.4 *contruncare* is a Plautine word, used to describe the greedy devouring of food in *Stich.* 554: 'meum ne contruncet cibum' ('so that they do not gobble up my food').²³ The decidedly Plautine language linked with parasitical activity allows Lucius' characterization as a comic character to emerge gradually.

This situation of hasty overfeeding and choking introduces Lucius' lack of restraint in food and a certain voracity, comparable with that of a Plautine parasite, who constantly boasts about his ingestive achievements—cf. the catalogue of food the parasite Ergasilus plans to devour (*Capt.* 901–8), and the havoc he wreaks in the kitchen larder (*Capt.* 909–21).

His interest in food, however, is unquenched. He acts the part of a parasite already in his first introduction, flattering prospective fellow diners and talking about *dinner* invitations. The difference is, however, that he flatters (in Plautine language)²⁴ his fellow-travellers in order to devour not their food, but their *tales* (*Met.* 1.4):

Sed iam cedo tu sodes, qui coeperas, fabulam remetire. Ego tibi solus haec pro isto credam et, quod ingressui primum fuerit stabulum, prandio participabo. Haec tibi merce<s> deposita est.

²² Cf. now also Keulen (2003a: 27f. and 122): 'cheesecake, a typical dish from Greek comedy'.

²³ Other parallels in Apuleius: Molt (1938: ad loc.); Callebat (1968: 514). Scobie (1975: ad loc.) points out that the word is used in Plautus and not again until Apuleius.

²⁴ On *cedo tu sodes* as Plautine cf. now Keulen (2003a: 133).

(So do, please, now run through the story again which you had begun. I'll believe it, if this man won't, and I'll stand you lunch at the first inn we reach on our journey. That is the reward that I have in store for you.)

There is also a funny inversion of his parasitical situation when he offers to buy his fellow-traveller's lunch in payment for his story—or does he? The (Plautine) word *participo* may here be used in deliberate ambiguity.²⁵ It can inter alia be used in the meaning 'to cause to participate in, to make a party to'.²⁶ Interpreting the word in this meaning, Lucius intends to buy his fellow-traveller lunch, which is the usually translated meaning.²⁷ The passage in *Met.* 1.4 is, however, slightly different, as it does not include the accusative necessary for this construction. It thus does not have to mean 'I will stand you lunch'.²⁸ The accusative *te* or *vos*, which seems to be necessary for this notion, is missing in the text, although it might conceivably be implied from the preceding *tibi*.²⁹

Moreover, in *Met.* 9.24 ('mensam nobiscum secura participat', ('she stopped worrying, and joined us at table'; trans. adapted)) the word means, as listed in the *ThLL*, 'to share with others in'.³⁰ If Apuleius applies this meaning, Lucius wants to say that he 'will participate in the meal', but makes no assertion whatsoever as to who is going to pay for it. The *merces* he promises his travelling-companion is thus ambiguous: it might be taken in the straightforward sense, as a dinner paid for by Lucius to recompense his story-telling, or in the less obvious sense, as the parasite's listening to his *hospes*' self-indulgent talk and being the only one who believes his tall stories as a recompense for the dinner the *hospes* stands his parasite. The fact that both meanings of *participare* are found in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*

²⁵ For another deliberate grammatical ambiguity cf. Keulen (2003a: 116f.) on *Met.* 1.3.3 *calles*, with reference to Plaut. *Poen.* 574. On *participabo* cf. now also Keulen (2003a: 134) (without the ambiguity).

²⁶ 'I. notione q. d. factitiva participem facere, impertire sim.: [...] A. pro obi. est is qui sua parte donatur', (thus *ThLL* vol. X, 1 fasc. IV s. v. *participo* (V. Leijenhörst).) as in Plaut. *Cist.* 165:[sc. virgo] 'paternum servom sui participat consili' ('she took a slave of her father's into her confidence'). This is where this passage is listed in the *ThLL* (under the 'structura "aliquem aliqua re"'), with the parallel in Apul. *Met.* 9.33: 'meum dominum comis hospes opipari prandio participat' ('the genial host at once allowed my master to share a handsome meal').

²⁷ This is also consistent with Iul. Val. 1.13 *vos participabo convivio* and the parallel Greek Hist. Alex. M. i. p. 21.2 (Kr.) καλέσω σε εἰς τοὺς ... γάμους ('I shall invite you to the wedding') All these passages are cited in *ThLL* ad loc. p. 504/81–4.

²⁸ Walsh's translation (1994: 3), ignoring the wilful duplicity of *participabo*.—Hanson's (1989) translation is more open: 'I will invite you to share dinner with me ... that is your guaranteed payment.'

²⁹ V. Leijenhörst (*ThLL* s. v. *participo*) himself is doubtful about the interpretation of the passages he lists. He inserts cross-references between the former and the latter passages.

³⁰ 'II, notione q. d. habitiva [...] i. q. participem esse [...] Cf. v. Leijenhörst (*ThLL* s. v. *participo*), 508, 42–4.

makes this pun highly likely. The ambiguity must be deliberate. Either Lucius stands Aristomenes lunch, turning him into a parasitical entertainer who gets lunch for his story, or Lucius himself is repaid by a slap-up meal—for listening and gracing his fellow-travellers with his company.

This duplicity in meaning is another parasitical trick, as this professional jester rejoices in wordplays and puns, which are his stock-in-trade.³¹ Lucius makes sure that he will get a *cena* in the end, preferably with his fellow passenger paying for it. His recompense for listening to his stories is his entertaining presence and the sharing of his meal: he promises that he will be the only one to listen to Aristomenes' tale and to believe it ('ego tibi solus haec pro isto credam' ('I'll believe it, if this man won't')), and thus he becomes Aristomenes' flatterer, his parasite, like Artotrogus in *Mil.* 21–4 (see above), or Peniculus in the *Menaechmi*, who is willing to listen and agree to whatever his patron will say, as long as he gets food as his reward (*Men.* 162: 'id enim quod tu vis, id aio atque id nego' ('I say whatever you want me to, I say yes or no'))).

At any rate, unlike Loukios in the *Onos*, whose travelling-companions share some food,³² Lucius is unsuccessful, and this deviation from the original story must be significant. The offer, taken at face value of offering a meal, is declined (*Met.* 1.5: 'aequi bonique facio' 'There is no need for your fair and kind offer'); the travellers split up shortly after the telling of the tale,³³ and Lucius gets no *cena* out of their meeting, neither having to pay for one for them nor having them pay for his.

Thus the expectation of dinner is thwarted on this first occasion: Lucius comes to the house of Milo still unfed. The problem of a *cena* invitation accordingly dominates the whole Milo episode. In Hypata, Lucius reacts like a proper Roman parasite. After he has arrived at Milo's house very hungry, he manages to get the necessary dinner invitation from Milo thanks to the letter of recommendation he has brought with him, without which it would be impossible for him to take part in the supposed *cena*.³⁴

³¹ Cf. *Capt.* 69–76 with Ergasilus' double pun on *invocare* and *esse*.

³² Cf. *Onos* 1.1: ἀλὼν ἐκοινοῦμεν. Literally: 'we shared some salt', it indicates the sharing of a meal.

³³ *Met.* 1.21: 'Is finis nobis et sermonis et itineris communis fuit. Nam comites uterque ad villulam proximam laevorsum abierunt. Ego vero quod primum ingressui stabulum conspicatus sum, accessi.' ('This made an end to our conversation and joint journey, for my companions both went off to a small farmhouse on the left of the road, while I made for the first inn that I saw.'). On the phrase *aequi bonique facio* cf. Callebat (1968: 84ff.); Keulen (2003a: 136).

³⁴ *Rogare* is, besides the more common *vocare*, a technical term used for a dinner invitation, cf. Martial *Ep.* 2.69. Cf. *Met.* 1.22: "rogat te", inquit [sc. Photis]; ("He asks you to come in," she said'), and again *Met.* 1.26.

His hope for a meal is, however, thwarted again. Although he is invited to Milo's house and wants food, the old miser does not supply him with comestibles. Lucius does not manage to get enough food to nourish himself, and even has to pay for the feeding of his horse (*Met.* 1.24). He does not even get any leftovers from his host's table as a respectable parasite would.

Still unfed, he has to go to the market in order to provide himself with something to eat. The first hint of a comedy scene, as Shanzer (1996) points out, is found in his destination: Lucius goes to the forum to buy fish.³⁵ This is a business common to parasites, *adulescentes* or cooks in comedy, who are frequently sent to the forum in order to provide for a *cena* with a *meretrix*.³⁶ Fish plays a major role in comic food.³⁷ Thus the comic aspect of the situation is underlined by the fact that it is fish that Lucius wants to buy for his *cena* in Hypata, a town not situated on the coast. Lucius' role as a parasite is also played upon when he sets off to go shopping in person, although he has several slaves at his disposal whom he could send shopping (*Met.* 2.15, 3.27, 7.1).

Lucius manages to buy expensive fish for his dinner, but before he can eat his *cena*, he meets a fellow student who is now the aedile of Hypata's market. This Pythias is enraged at the high price Lucius paid for his dinner, and 'punishes' the fishmonger by trampling upon Lucius' purchase. Lucius is then left to deplore the loss of both his money and his dinner (*Met.* 1.25: 'prudētis condiscipuli valido consilio et nummis simul privatus et cena' ('robbed of both my money and my supper by this stern sermon from my wise fellow-student')). The scene in *Capt.* 807–26 is comparable, which shows the parasite Ergasilus in a messenger speech, complaining about the bad quality of fish in the forum, threatening the fishmongers with violence involving a shopping basket, and the playful equation of Ergasilus with an aedile.³⁸

The words 'piscatum praestinatū abire' ('to go away and buy some fish'; *Capt.* 848) show a clear relation of this scene to Apuleius', and Ergasilus takes

³⁵ The scene as a whole is analysed for comic features by Shanzer (1996).

³⁶ Terence's parasite Gnatho (*Eun.* 256f.) is well acquainted with the fishmongers, thus his function of going shopping often and extensively can be inferred. Shopping done by the young man: *Bacch.* 96f.; by cook: *Men.* 273; by parasite: *Capt.* 474: 'ipsi obsonant, quae parasitorum ante erat provincia' ('they go shopping themselves, that used to be the task of the parasites before').

³⁷ Cf. Plaut. *Aul.* 373–4: 'rogito piscis | indicant caros' ('I enquire for fish, | they indicate it is expensive!'), 398: 'desquama piscis' ('Scale the fish!'); *Most.* 67: 'ego in Piraeum volo | in vesperum parare piscatum mihi' ('I will go to Piraeus and get some fish for myself for dinner.');

Stich. 358: 'alii piscis depurgate quos piscatu rettuli' ('you others, clean the fish, which I brought back from the fish-shopping'). On the social implications of food cf. Gowers (1993), and Davidson (1997).

³⁸ These points are also made by Shanzer (1996: 448).

over the function of an aedile, threatening the fishmongers, just as Pythias does with the fishmongers in Apuleius. Unfortunately, however, for Lucius, the aedile does not refrain from violence this time, as the 'aedile' Ergasilus in Plautus had. His fish are trampled upon, which causes Lucius to suffer the punishment of an over-officious aedile.³⁹ By turning Ergasilus' mere threats and wishful thinking into an actual event, Apuleius begins to become more farcical and comic than even Plautus himself in a scene he undoubtedly added to the Greek plot.

Even if the involvement of an aedile is not a typical comic scene, the verbal allusions to the *Captivi* are sufficient to establish the parallels between Apuleius' food-deprived Lucius and a comic parasite, whose efforts to provide a decent fish dish for himself are thwarted. It is the third time for Lucius on the same day and in the same book of the *Metamorphoses* that his dinner hopes come to nothing. Again he has to leave the scene, hungry and unfed, and to look around for different food provision.

Shanzer wants to reconstruct a scene of a lost play as the ultimate source of Apuleius' fish-trampling,⁴⁰ but she does not realize that the features she points out are part of a greater pattern, where the changes to the scene are intentional in order to establish Lucius as a comic parasite, and perhaps not necessarily based on a lost play. She accordingly compares the ending of *Met.* 1 with two Plautine comedies to illustrate that 'in the stock pattern someone sets out to have a holiday and ends up having what might be called a "day from hell"'.⁴¹ Her parallels, however, (Menaechmus I, Ballio in the *Pseudolus*) are not persuasive, as Menaechmus, although deprived of wife and *meretrix* in the end, finds his brother and resolves his unfulfilling marriage ties, whereas the pimp Ballio, as one of the unsympathetic characters of the comedy, is justly punished.

Lucius' troubles are, however, not over yet. After he gets home from his excursion, he declares that he would rather go to bed than have his dinner, in order to go along with Milo's miserliness. However, although he does not get his meal as a just reward for his pains, he is dragged out of his room to Milo's dinner table, where he has to entertain his host by telling his story (*Met.* 1.26):

'Quam salve agit', inquit [sc. Milo], 'Demeas noster? Quid uxor? Quid liberi? Quid vernaculi?' Narro singula. Percontatur accuratius causas etiam peregrinationis meae.

³⁹ Cf. the similar scene in *Stich.* 288ff. where the parasite Gelasimus accuses the slave Pinacium of being an aedile who denies him his supper (consisting of fish); cf. esp. 288, 353. Aediles may destroy bad comestibles in comedy: *Rud.* 370ff. (Shanzer (1996: 449f.)).

⁴⁰ Shanzer (1996: 447, 453f.). She thinks that Pomponius' lost *Piscatores*, an *Atellana*, might be close to the scene in Apuleius as we have it, but admits to the speculative nature of her reconstruction.

⁴¹ Shanzer (1996: 450).

Quas ubi probe protuli, iam et de patria nostra et eius primoris ac denique de ipso praeside scrupulosissime explorans, [...] tandem patitur cubitum concederem.

(‘How is our friend Demeas? And his wife? And his children? And the family-slaves?’ I answered the queries one by one. He questioned me also in some detail about the reasons for my journey. I conscientiously explained. He then conducted an exhaustive enquiry about my native region, its prominent citizens, and finally about the governor himself. [...] So finally he allowed me to go to bed.)

Instead of finally getting his meal, his hopes, which are not too high now anyway, come to nothing for the fourth time on the same day, and instead of eating he has to entertain his host and listen to his boring dinner-talk. He complains of Milo’s loquacity (‘rancidi senis loquax et famelicum convivium’ (‘the noisome old man’s feast, which was long on words but short on victuals’; *Met.* 1.26)). Thus he has to flatter Milo like a parasite and sycophant, whilst using comic diction,⁴² but does not get his parasitical reward, a dinner, out of him, because he has to go on talking although he is overly tired and dozes off in the middle of the conversation, *Met.* 1.26:

fabularum quoque serie fatigatum in verba media somnolentum desinere ac necquicquam, defectum iam, incerta verborum salebra balbutire.

(I was further exhausted by this continuing patter, for I kept nodding off midway through a conversation, and I was now so weary that I was slurring out meaningless comments in my replies.)

All in all, the portrait of Lucius in the first book of the *Metamorphoses* shows that Apuleius adds some characteristically parasitic traits without quite turning the *adulescens* he needs later into a stock parasite. Lucius is, however, both a flatterer and a thwarted would-be glutton throughout the first book, as represented in his introduction on his way to Hypata.

When he is invited to dine with Milo, his expectations run high, but are thwarted in the end, and although he tries to offer entertainment to Milo by both talking a lot himself and listening to his host, he has to go to bed unfed at the end of the day.

Occasionally Roman comedies feature a sympathetic parasite as their protagonist, for example Plautus’ *Curculio*. Those characters are witty and ingenious and carry out the comic intrigue,⁴³ but Lucius is very different: Plautus’ cunning parasites are fully aware that their flatteries are lies and exaggerations to get dinner, but Lucius is made to act as an *unconscious kolax*, who does not know that his flattering follows the conventions of Roman

⁴² Callebaut (1968: 296) (on *percontare*) comments on the comic context of this scene. Up to a certain extent, *probe* is part of the diction of comic poets, cf. Callebaut (1968: 537).

⁴³ Corbett (1986: 7f.).

theatre. His hyperactive credulity is genuine, not faked. Because of this naivety, his only attempt at creating an intrigue in order to see magic done fails, contrary to the successful attempts undertaken by some Plautine parasites such as Curculio. In his scheming with Photis Lucius tries to take over the role of the intriguer, but fails completely, as he turns from the controller of the intrigue into its accidental victim, an ass.

Interestingly, Apuleius again stresses the link between food and words, which was also visible in Lucius' flattering his fellow traveller in order to hear his story, in the last sentence: 'somno, non cibo gravatus, cenatus solis fabulis' ('heavy with sleep but not with food (for I had dined on nothing but *fabulae*); *Met.* 1.26; trans. adapted).⁴⁴ This line explicitly recalls the prologue of Plautus' *Poenulus*, who warns the audience (l. 8): 'qui non edistis, saturi fite fabulis' ('you who did not eat, will be filled up with plays'). The first book of the *Metamorphoses*, which started with a comic prologue, ends with an explicit echo of one. This frames effectively a comic story, and leads the reader to expect a largely comic novel.

There is a remarkable similarity between the two concepts of voracity and credulous curiosity: Lucius wants to be a devourer of food as well as of stories, and the two ideas are set next to each other, both in his introduction (*Met.* 1.4) and the last sentence of Book I. His success in getting his desires, however, is only partial. Although he is able to listen to several narrations on the same day, he is unable to procure a single meal for himself. This antipodic relationship between food and stories, and their respective availability, governs Lucius' main interest in the further course of the story, especially after he is turned into an ass.

This transformation into an ass is a suitable metamorphosis for a parasite, since comic parasites are more than once compared with animals⁴⁵ greedy for food, and the voracity of the ass is proverbial. Examples from Greek comedy range from maggots or worms (Anaxilas 32: *σκόληκες*); to flies (Antiphanes 193.7: *μύια*); frogs, caterpillars, birds, and cicadas (Aristophanes 10); geese (Epigenes 2); and beastly parasites such as lice,⁴⁶ while in Roman comedy parasites are like mice (Plaut. *Capt.* 77: [parasite speaking]: 'quasi mures semper edimus alienum cibum' ('like mice we always eat other people's food'; cf. *Persa* 58)); snails (*Capt.* 80); hunting dogs (*Capt.* 85f.; 184); vultures (*Capt.* 844); hawks and kites (Ter. *Phorm.* 330). The metaphors for parasites, on the one hand, stress their ability to find food rather cunningly (parasites

⁴⁴ Cf. Ch. 5.3 above.

⁴⁵ Damon (1997: 28 n. 16).

⁴⁶ This idea seems to underlie *Sikyonioides* 10 K.-A. = ARNOTT (1979–2000: iii. Fr. 13) = Aelian NA 9.7.

are like dogs), but mainly the *tertium comparationis* is their greed in devouring it (mice). Apuleius uses the animal metaphor of dogs and vultures for a hungry parasite already in his *Apologia* (57.5, cf. Ch. 4.4 above). A voracious ass suits this company well.

In Ovidian terms, the character is transformed into something with which he already shared some character traits before his metamorphosis.⁴⁷ Lucius, behaving like a parasite and thus animal-like, is justly turned into a greedy beast. Apuleius applies the bestial metaphor to a practical purpose, when he metamorphoses a parasitical Lucius into a donkey, which throughout the story is very much concerned with eating, and which finally becomes the official parasite of a high official, still being an ass (*Met.* 10.16).

Later on in the story, Lucius keeps up his bestial appetite for food (cf. the cook episode *Met.* 10.13ff.),⁴⁸ but during the whole course of his adventures the ass is also greedy for stories (cf. *Met.* 1.20). Just as already before his metamorphosis Lucius shows a large capacity for devouring food as well as stories, the transformed Lucius becomes a credulous devourer of both, a social parasite interested in stories as well as in food.

7.3. MILO'S HOUSE: A *DOMUS COMICA* (‘COMIC HOUSEHOLD’)

The use of comic elements in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* is not limited to the use of stock figures in the characterization of single characters. The whole house of Milo is, as will be argued in this section, identifiable as a stage house of Roman comedy, inhabited by comic characters shaped after the stock figures of Greek New and Roman comedy. The house itself is introduced in a way reminiscent of Plautine stage conventions. To investigate this, a small digression into the staging of Roman comedies is necessary.⁴⁹

The action of a play conventionally took place outside a house, in the open street, which is represented by the stage. Visible to the audience, and used by the actors, are several ‘houses’ formed by the actors’ house in the background with several doors opening on the stage. The two side-entrances have often been interpreted as leading to the nearer (right) and more remote distance

⁴⁷ Bandini (1986); James (1987: 92f.).

⁴⁸ May (1998).—Lucius devours large quantities of food in 4.22 (three baskets of bread), showing that he sees himself as not quite a beast alone, cf. Schlam (1992: 102); Heath (1981); Keulen (2000).

⁴⁹ Details: Beare (1964: 176ff.), to whom this paragraph is heavily indebted.

(left). In plays set in a town, the right entrance would lead to the town centre or *forum*.

Whether and to what extent stage decoration and painting was used to indicate which house belongs to which character in the comedy is a matter still discussed by critics⁵⁰ and irrelevant to the present argument. More important are the hints given by the text itself. It is usually the prologue-speaker who indicates the houses and names their inhabitants with their characteristics, for example Plaut. *Aul.* 3ff.: 'Hanc domum | iam multos annos est quom possideo et colo | patri' ('For many years already I have possessed this house and looked after it for the father'); or, notably, *Amph.* 97f.: 'Haec urbs est Thebae. In illisce habitat aedibus | Amphitruo, natus Argis ex Argo patre' ('This city here is Thebes. Amphitruo lives in that house, born in Argos of an Argive father'); or *Cas.* 35f.: 'senex hic maritus habitat; ei est filius, | is una cum patre in illisce habitat aedibus' ('An old married man lives here; he has a son, who lives together with his father in that house'). These statements could be direct answers to Lucius' question to the old woman: 'dic oro et cuiatis sit et quibus deversetur aedibus?' ('would you please tell me something of his background, and which house he lives in?'; *Met.* 1.21). *Cuiatis* is archaic and often dramatic.⁵¹

Milo's house is described by the old woman in the following way (*Met.* 1.21):

Milo, qui extra pomerium et urbem totam colit. [...] Videsne [...] extremas fenestras, quae foris urbem prospiciunt, et altrinsecus fores proximum respicientes angiportum? Inibi iste Milo deversatur ampliter nummatus et longe opulentus.

([Milo] stands outside the city boundary; in fact he lives outside the town. [...] Do you see the last set of windows looking out on the town, with the entrance on the other side facing the nearest alley-way? Mister Moneybags Milo lives there.)

Although she is not asked to do so by Lucius, she not only repeats Milo's name, but also offers a brief characterization. In this she resembles the *prologus* in a Roman comedy, who indicates a stage house, names the character who lives there, and explains his profession or character. The language is Plautine,⁵² and the visual marker *videsne* ('Do you see') as well as the second-person demonstrative *iste* then take over the function of the *prologus*' gesture of pointing at the stage house, creating an illusion of

⁵⁰ Cf. conveniently Beare (1964: 275ff.) for the discussion; he personally does not believe in any stage painting. Webster (1974: 80f.) assumes stage painting for Menander, but assigns a major part of scenery illusion to its description within the text. Cf. Wiles (1991: 36–67).

⁵¹ Cf. Accius *trag.* 22 Ribbeck and 625 Ribbeck, Plaut. *Curc.* 407, *Poen.* 109 and 993, *Men.* 341 etc. Cf. Callebat (1968: 492). On the phrase cf. Keulen (2003a: 141).

⁵² Cf. n. 81 below on *ampliter*.

visuality during the scene. Milo, as will be argued below, indeed shows some affinity with a stock comic character whose household might be introduced in this way.

There is no evidence for windows on the stage used in Plautine drama which could relate to Apuleius' *fenestras*,⁵³ but in the theatres of the second century AD, which generally had lavish decorations, real windows could indeed be found in the stage-settings.

Relevant, too, is the old woman's reference to the relation of Milo's house to the *urbs*, on the outskirts of which it is built. This is an important location mark in comedy itself, as even in plays set in a city, characters going off-stage often indicate their wish to go to the *forum*, an indication that the house itself is not in the centre of town, for example Plaut. *Asin.* 108: 'ego eo ad forum' ('I am going to the forum'); *Bacch.* 902, *Cas.* 526 (all scenes set in Athens) etc.

The *angiportus* or *angiportum* the old woman mentions in *Met.* 1.21 is another (little used) stage convention, associated only with the Roman stage, and can represent both the street the audience sees before it or, more often, one which is invisible behind the houses:⁵⁴ 'the *angiportus* is not shown and could not be shown to the eye; its use is exceptional, and receives express mention'.⁵⁵ It forms an additional invisible exit from a house for characters in plays, and also occurs in Apuleius: Molt (1938: 97f.) lists the ancient explanations for this unusual word,⁵⁶ one of which explains its use in Terence.⁵⁷ It is quite often used as a technical term of architecture in Vitruvius, but it has some comic implications because of its wide use in Plautus and Terence.

The conclusion, however, that this is evidence for the deliberate use of this word to allude to Milo's house as a *domus comica* or comic household has not been drawn so far, but the analogy is evident: as the windows pointed out by the old woman are visible to Lucius, the *angiportus* on the other side

⁵³ When there is a reference to a *fenestra*, it is evident from the context that there is no window visible on stage (Plaut. *Cas.* 132, *Mil.* 379, *Rud.* 88); the use in Ter. *Haut.* 481 is metaphorical. For evidence for windows on the *phlyax*-stage cf. Bieber (1961: 137, fig. 501).

⁵⁴ Evidence for the *angiportus* in Roman comedy: Plaut. *Asin.* 741, *Cist.* 124, 384; *Most.* 1044f., 1046; *Persa* 444, 678; *Pseud.* 961 (twice), 971, 1235. Ter. *Eun.* 845; *Phorm.* 891; *Ad.* 576, 578. Cf. also Beare (1964: 256ff.) on the *angiportus* in general. On *angiportus* as a comic element in Apuleius: Callebat (1968: 481).

⁵⁵ Beare (1964: 181).

⁵⁶ Callebat (1968: 481ff.) argues for a specifically comic usage of the word here. *Angiportus* also appears in non-comic contexts, notably seven times in Vitruvius; it is, however, remarkable that it appears eleven times in Plautus and four times in Terence (six times in Apuleius), out of forty-five occurrences in the whole Latin corpus before AD 200 (more than a third of the instances are comic), and thus is readily linked with comic language as well as with *sermo cotidianus*.

⁵⁷ Don. *ad Ter. Ad.* 578: 'angiportum id est angusta et curva via, quasi anguiportus, alii quod inter portus sit locus angustus, hoc est inter domos, nam domos vel portus vel insulas veteres dixerunt'.

(*altrinsecus*) of the house cannot be seen by the spectators. Nevertheless it is mentioned and left to be imagined by Lucius, just as the *angiportus*, invisible to the audience but mentioned to them when necessary, is used in Roman comedy. Because of its invisibility it has no value for describing a route at all; the mention of it must have a different purpose. Since the word *angiportus* is especially linked with a comedy setting and one of the few distinctive markers for comic scenery in Plautus' text, its use is an indication of Apuleius' wish to introduce Lucius into a comic environment.

It is evident, then, that the directions the old woman gives to Lucius are less of a useful route description than an indication of the comic setting of the scene. It is more to the reader's benefit than to Lucius', to whom a simple indication that Milo's house was the last one in the street would have sufficed. As soon as Lucius enters this house in Hypata, he will find himself in the topsy-turvy world of comedy.

Thus he unknowingly starts to conform to the comic environment even before he enters the house. He knocks on Milo's door (*Met.* 1.22: 'et cum dicto modico secus progressus [h]ostium accedo et ianuam firmiter opp[r]essulatam pulsare vocaliter incipio' ('After making this conversation, I walked on a little further, and reached the entrance to the house. The door was close-barred, and I began to shout and hammer on it')). When an *adulescentula*, a young girl, who later turns out to be the slave girl Photis, opens the door, Apuleius writes a kind of comic dialogue:

'heus tu', inquit [sc. *adulescentula*], '*qui tam fortiter fores verberasti*, sub qua specie mutuari cupis? An tu solus ignoras praeter aurum argentumque nullum nos pignus admittere?'

('Hello there!' she said. 'You've certainly given the door a good wallop! What security do you intend to offer for a loan? You surely can't be the only one who is unaware that the only pledge we accept is gold or silver.')

This is reminiscent of a typical comic door-knocking scene. A character on stage calls out another, who is still inside one of the stage houses, by knocking on the other person's door.⁵⁸ This is a common means of introducing a new character in the play, and its main dramatic function in comedy is to create suspense in the audience about the following scene.⁵⁹

Sometimes the character standing outside the door knocks so vehemently, that the character inside complains about the potential breaking of the door, for example the knocking parasite in *Bacch.* 579–86:⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Cocchia (1915: 254) calls the door-knocking Plautine, without going into detail.

⁵⁹ Brown (1995: 72ff.); he gives a good overview of the Plautine door-knocking scenes p. 82f.

⁶⁰ Other instances: *Amph.* 1021–7; *Asin.* 384; *Capt.* 832; *Merc.* 130; *Most.* 453–6, 939; *Rud.* 414; *Stich.* 311f., 326f; *Truc.* 256.

PARASITUS ut pulsat propudium!
 comesse panem tris pedes latum potes,
 fores pultare nescis. ecquis in aedibust?
 heus, ecquis hic est? ecquis hoc aperit ostium?
 ecquis exit?—PISTOCLERUS Quid istuc? quae istaec est
 pulsatio?
 quae te <male> mala crux agitat, qui ad istunc modum
 alieno viris tuas extentes ostio?
 fores paene ecfregisti.

(PARASITUS How that shameful one knocks! You can devour a piece of bread three feet wide, and do not know how to knock on a door. Anyone in the house? Hey, you, anyone in? Anyone to open the door? Anyone coming out?—PISTOCLERUS ‘What is this? What is this knocking about? What the hell is driving you to apply your strength in this way to the door of a stranger? You almost broke down the door!)

The knocking itself is, as in this example, often accompanied by shouting. Lucius makes sure that he is heard both by knocking (*pulsare*) and by shouting (*vocaliter*). There is no reason other than comic convention for Lucius to appeal for admission in such an unnecessarily loud manner. Photis’ reaction when opening the door is understandably harsh, but again follows comic conventions. She does not go so far as to accuse Lucius of breaking her door, but still she complains of his vehemence, and with a remarkably Plautine word: *verberare* is also used of door-knocking in *Asin.* 386f. (the slave speaks): ‘nolo ego fores conservas | meas a te verberarier’ (‘I do not want the doors, my fellow-slaves, to be beaten up by you’). Even the term *adulescentula* may be a Plautine reference.⁶¹

Sometimes, as in this example, these complaints about mistreating the doors when knocking are uttered by a slave who is especially rude after he or she has opened the door⁶² (cf. *Rud.* 414, *Truc.* 256–314). Thus Photis’ harsh reaction introduces her as a comic slave, which conforms with her further characterization.

The Greek *Onos* 2 does not feature this kind of comic door-knocking: Loukios knocks without this vehemence, and the scene is far from the vividly comic description of an infuriated slave girl answering the door in Apuleius: ‘ἐγὼ δὲ κόπτω προσελθὼν τὴν θύραν, καὶ μολὺς μὲν καὶ βραδέως, ὑπήκουσε δ’ οὖν γυνή, εἶτα καὶ προῆλθεν’ (‘I went to the door and knocked, and slowly and reluctantly a woman then heard me and came out’). There is no reason why the epitomator should turn the heavy knocking and boisterous exchange into

⁶¹ *Adulescentula* evokes comedy, cf. *Epid.* 43 ‘forma lepida adulescentulam’ (‘a young girl with a charming figure’, with Callebat (1998: 191 = 1964), (1968: 508).

⁶² For rude slaves as door-openers: Brown (1995: 84).

its exact opposite, so that it can be safely assumed that there was no intention of a comic allusion in the Greek original, and that this embellishment can be attributed to Plautus.

It is evident that every episode connected with Milo's house so far has a comic subtext. The description of the house as well as Lucius' first encounter with its inhabitants is carefully shaped after Plautine comic conventions, both in the use of vocabulary and in the use of set comedy scenes. The contemporary reader of Apuleius who is aware of these comic conventions will easily recognize them and might infer some expectations for the following scenes. Such a reader can compare the characters living in Milo's house with stock characters known from comedy and draw conclusions from this. It is important for Apuleius to have established his reader's expectations long before the actual plot of intrigues inside the house begins to develop.

Milo

After a possible comic intertext has been established for Milo's house, it is necessary to analyse how the cast of its inhabitants maps on to the expectations created by this intertext.

Milo's house stands on the outskirts of the town, 'qui extra pomerium et urbem totam colit' ('[which] stands outside the city boundary; in fact, he lives outside the town', *Met.* 1.21). This voluntary segregation from the city might be unusual considering his profession as a moneylender, who should be at the centre of things, but it is reminiscent of a typical comic character, the miser. He is one manifestation of this type found in New Comedy, represented by characters such as the miser, the misanthrope, or the misogynist in Menander. For example, Knemon in Menander's *Dyskolos* lives out in the country, voluntarily segregated from human society.⁶³ There were Greek plays centred around the caricature characterization of this kind of seceding type,⁶⁴ but only Plautus' *Aulularia*⁶⁵ gives a full representation of it in Latin comedy. This type of stock character normally does not voluntarily communicate with the rest of society, and thus segregates himself bodily, too, by moving to the outskirts of his city or even beyond its boundaries.⁶⁶ Many of this type are *senes*,⁶⁷ which is also true of Milo.

⁶³ Knemon's house: Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 134ff.).

⁶⁴ Jachmann (1931: 139); Webster (1974: 19).

⁶⁵ Its possibly Menandrian origin is still under discussion: Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 4).

⁶⁶ For the sociological aspect of this segregation: Konstan (1983: 33ff.).

⁶⁷ Miserly *senes* in comedy: Neumann (1958: 74ff.).

Being a *senex* (explicitly at *Met.* 1.26) as well as a miser, Milo can easily take over some of the characteristics of the materialistic old man of comedy. This idea of embellishing the comic characterization might be inspired by the word *φιλαργυρώτατος* ('very fond of money') in the *Onos*, since this is a particular character trait of old men in comedy.⁶⁸

Apuleius, however, seems to have had Plautus' best-known miser Euclio, from the *Aulularia*, in mind when he characterized Milo: Euclio, too, lives outside human society, which is symbolized by his moving his pot of gold slowly out of the city limits. The pot of gold he found under his fireplace, and which he feels the need to hide in safe places ever further away from society, is first moved to the temple of Fides, and then, after Euclio deems this place unsafe, moved again to the grove of the forest god Silvanus, which is 'extra murum et avius' ('outside the city walls and inaccessible', *Aul.* 674).⁶⁹ 'Euclio has deliberately and explicitly abandoned the city.'⁷⁰

Like Euclio, Milo is unwilling to part with any part of his treasure. Euclio is able to supply his daughter's dowry with the money in the pot, but refuses to do so, besides living in neurotic fear of thieves stealing his pot of gold from him. Milo, too, does not use his wealth: his dining room does not even feature the essential furniture for reclining while eating, again because he has an overpowering fear of thieves (*Met.* 1.23). Their wealth is stored up but not used, until it is taken away by the thieves they had tried to hide it from: cf. the cunning slave in *Aulularia*, who by the theft initiates the resolution of the play, and the robbers in *Metamorphoses*, whose stealing of both Milo's gold and the ass initiates the *Odyssey* of the ass-shaped Lucius.

Besides the similarities in characterization, there may be also in Apuleius a reference to the *Aulularia* to trigger the recognition of Milo as a novelistic Euclio and the identification of the setting; Euclio is so mean that he fears that the smoke rising from his houses might steal something from them:⁷¹ Plaut. *Aul.* 300f.: 'qui divom atque hominum clamat continuo fidem | ... de suo tigillo fumus si qua exit foras' ('he constantly cries for heaven and people to witness ... if any smoke gets out of his house from his hearth-beam'). This may also be a Menandrian joke, since it occurs in Menander according to Choricius 32.73: *Σμικρίνης ὁ δεδιὼς μή τι τῶν ἔνδον ὁ καπνὸς οἴχοιτο φέρων* ('Smikrines was afraid that the smoke would abduct something from

⁶⁸ Cf. Men. *Epit.* 136f., 139f., 749ff.; *Asp.* 82ff., 149ff. (with actual mention of the adjective); 182ff.; *Dysk.* 795f. etc. Neumann (1958: 74, 91f.); Krieter-Spiro (1997: 157).

⁶⁹ Similar phrasing: *Met.* 1.21: 'extra pomerium et urbem totam' ('outside the city boundary ... outside the town').

⁷⁰ Konstan (1983: 38).

⁷¹ Thus, too, Shanzer (1996: 451 with n. 6).

inside.’).⁷² Parasites smelling kitchen-smoke is a joke Apuleius had already employed in *Apol.* 58.7.⁷³ Apuleius’ Lucius already thinks about the consequences of this kind of miserliness, the absolute absence of any thieving kitchen-smoke in Milo’s house: *Met.* 1.21: ‘in cuius hospitio nec fumi nec nidoris nebulam vereretur’ (‘I need have no fear of kitchen-smoke or foul-smelling fumes in his lodging’). It is, however, relevant that the quotation from the *Metamorphoses* is Lucius’ own conclusion after hearing about Milo. He is not conscious of entering a *domus comica* with all its stock characters, but he nevertheless reacts as if he were taking part in a comedy, drawing the right conclusions from the generic evidence.

Indeed, Milo shares even more features with the misers Euclio and Smikrines (in Menander’s *Epitrepontes*), and others. The typical stock miser or misanthrope has only one single female slave (Sophrone in *Epitrepontes*, Simiche in *Dyskolos*). Milo is introduced in a similar way: ‘neque praeter unicam pascit ancillulam’ (‘the only servant he feeds is one young girl’; *Met.* 1.21), and the use of comic words and comic setting allows the reader to speculate about the unnamed *ancilla* as the usual old slave woman of the miser⁷⁴ (cf. also below on Photis).

Apuleius’ Milo has yet another characteristic: Milo is a moneylender, a stock professional character⁷⁵ who appears under the title *trapezita* or *danista* in several Plautine plays where the purchase of a courtesan is an issue and not enough money for this venture is available to the young man.⁷⁶ Menander and his close follower in sentiment, Terence, do not seem to feature the moneylender in our extant plays. Plautus, however, portrays several *danistae*, exploiting their comic potential. Their characterization is mostly unsympathetic,⁷⁷ since they normally form blocking characters standing between the young lovers. Although as moneylenders they are supposed to be rich, they often also border on the verge of impecuniousness and thus necessarily have to display the same symptoms as the unprofessional miser. The *Epidicus* features a moneylender who advances the money to buy a captive girl to the young man who takes her to Athens, where he claims it back successfully (*Epid.* 52ff., 631ff.). He is however a secondary figure in the play without any

⁷² Cf. Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 4 with n. 1).

⁷³ Cf. Ch. 4.4 above on Crassus.

⁷⁴ It later turns out that Milo has more than one slave. Apuleius decides to contradict himself in these passages in order to introduce a comic element, cf. generally van Mal-Maeder (1995) and my discussion below.

⁷⁵ Duckworth (1994: 261f.).

⁷⁶ Also in plays in which the moneylender is mentioned, but does not appear on stage, he receives a bad press: *Asinaria*, *Captivi*, *Pseudolus*, and *Trinummus*.

⁷⁷ Cf. the unflattering equation of the *leno* and the *danista* in *Curc.* 505–11.

personal character traits. More colourfully depicted is Misargyrides in *Most.* 532–689, who is unwittingly used by the cunning slave in the intrigue after he claims back his interest several times, displaying a certain obsession with money, as the slave Tranio justly notices (*Most.* 603–6). This anxiety is partly justified by his business going bad (cf. 533–5). Another moneylender without much money is Lyco in *Curc.* 371–4, the most elaborately depicted *trapezita* in Plautus, in a play that interestingly features a cunning parasite as its hero. Not unlike Milo in the *Metamorphoses*, Lyco is induced to accept an unknown messenger, because he brings a letter from an absent friend who calls him *hospes*, cf. *Curc.* 429ff.

In this context it is important that Apuleius also changes the name of the *hospes* who supplies him with the introductory letter to Milo. The Greek epitome calls him Dekrios or Dekrianos, supposedly a famous sophist from Patrae (about whom nothing is known),⁷⁸ and there is no reason to suppose that the epitomator changed the names in the original. Apuleius' preferred name Demeas, however, is a much used name in comedy for a *senex*⁷⁹ well-suited to serving as a friend of the *senex* Milo.⁸⁰

Needless to say, the moneylender falls victim to the intrigue invented by the cunning parasite Curculio and supplies him with the necessary money to buy the girl from the *leno*. At the end of the comedy, Lyco loses his money and is almost forced to plead bankruptcy (cf. *Curc.* 683f.); Milo, too, will be bankrupt at the end of his story, because the robbers will have taken all his goods away from him.

Milo displays several of these Plautine features: as a moneylender he is stingy and miserly, and obsessed with keeping his money. Moreover, Apuleius uses Plautine words to make the parallels more explicit. The whole passage spoken by the prologue-like old woman to describe Milo is coloured with Plautine words (*Met.* 1.21):

Inibi iste Milo deversatur ampliter nummatus et longe opulentus, verum extremae avaritiae et sordis infimae infamis homo, foenus denique copiosum sub arrabone auri et argenti crebriter exercens, exiguo Lare inclusus et aerugini semper intentus.

⁷⁸ Variation: cf. critical apparatus in MacLeod ad loc. Ch. 2.

⁷⁹ Cf. Demeas in Menander (*Dis Exapaton*, but with unknown function; *Misoumenos*, *Samia*, etc.) and Terence (*Adelphoe*, perhaps in *Eunuchus*), but not in Plautus, whose names are generally more colourful and unusual, cf. his statement in *Bacch.* 649: 'non mihi isti placent Parmenones, Syri' ('I do not care for these Parmenos and Syruses'). On the name as a speaking name expressing the character's boorishness in Terence: Austin (1922: 49f.).

⁸⁰ Brotherton (1934), although she lists 'Pamphile' as a speaking name (p. 49, note 47), has nothing to add here, since her main interest is in when and not in why characters are introduced in the *Metamorphoses*.—According to Stobaeus (*Ecl.* 4.22.71) there may have been a Demeas in Menander's *Misogynes* (fr. 325K = 276 Sandbach), which might form a nice friend for a declared separatist as Milo is. Unfortunately, a papyrus renders the vocative Σιμύλε ('Simyle') instead.

(Mister Moneybags Milo lives there. Though he is extremely wealthy, he is notorious for being an absolute miser, living in utter squalor. He is a moneylender on a large scale, charging high interest and taking gold and silver as security. Yet he lives in that tiny house, spending all his time counting his mildewed coins.)

Ampliter ('abundantly') is not only *sermo cotidianus*, but also decidedly Plautine,⁸¹ cf. Plaut. *Bacch.* 677, *Cas.* 501, *Cist.* 598, *Merc.* 99, *Mil.* 758, *Stich.* 692; *opulentus* ('abounding in wealth') occurs nineteen times in Plautus, *faenus* or *foenus* ('interest') is the *leitmotif* in Lyco's text, while *arrabo* ('deposit') is a Plautine technical term (nine instances), with one occurrence in Ter. *Haut.* 603, and considered obsolete by Gellius (*NA* 1.17.21).⁸² This sole occurrence of this word in Apuleius in a passage on a comic moneylender shows Apuleius' deliberate use of Plautine words to create a comic atmosphere. Even *exiguo Lare* ('in a tiny house', literally 'Lar') may be an allusion to the *Aulularia*, where the prologue, stressing the previous poverty of Euclio's household and his excessive miserliness, is spoken by the *Lar familiaris*.

Milo's resemblance to comic characters such as the miser and the moneylender seems again to be Apuleius' invention. Although suppositions as to what Apuleius has taken over from his Greek source but is not found in the epitome vary, it is nonetheless highly likely that Apuleius embellished Milo's miserliness of his own accord: his Greek equivalent Hipparchos, who bears an élite name, is, according to Loukios' travel companions, *φιλαργυρώτατος* ('very fond of money') in the *Onos* (1.3), but nothing much is made of this character trait, and there is no actual evidence in the *Onos* for the host's miserliness: in the end Loukios is fed by him with a decent dinner, which is not miserly at all: 'τὸ δὲ δειπνον οὐ σφόδρα λιτόν ὁ δὲ οἶνος ἡδύς καὶ παλαιὸς ἦν' ('the dinner was not at all frugal, and the wine was sweet and old').

The *Onos* shows no indication of any miserliness, although the fact that Hipparchos keeps only one slave and his wife is mentioned in the text as a sign of his love of money.⁸³ There is, moreover, no indication that Hipparchos is a moneylender. Even the after-dinner conversation seems to have been less tiring in the Greek text (*Onos* 3: 'πότος ἦν καὶ λόγος οἶος ἐπὶ δείπνου ξένου' ('there was drink and conversation as is the customs during dinner with a guest')). Although the latter phrase might be a summarizing sentence used by

⁸¹ Cf. Callebat (1968: 518 and 535). The word is reprised by Gellius 2.6.11 and 10.3.4. *Inibi* is another archaism, cf. Callebat (1968: 519).

⁸² Cf. Scobie (1975: ad loc.).

⁸³ μίαν θεραπαινὴν τρέφει καὶ τὴν αὐτοῦ γαμετὴν μόναν· ἔστι γὰρ φιλαργυρώτατος δεινῶς. ('he keeps only one servant woman and his wife, for he is terribly fond of money'; *Onos* 1.3).

an epitomator,⁸⁴ there is no reason to assume that the epitomator would contradict statements in the original.

There is also another sign of inconsistency about the portrait of Milo's riches and miserliness: whereas Milo in the first book is described by the old woman as a miser who only nourishes one slave, he seems to have a large *familia* in Book 4, in the narrative of the robber.⁸⁵ Van Mal-Maeder argues that these shifts of characterization are due to the interested subjectivity of the different narrators involved in describing the situation.⁸⁶ She points out⁸⁷ that it is perhaps only Lucius' imagination which turns Milo into a miser,⁸⁸ whereas Milo is trying to behave like a reasonably hospitable host to his guest. If Milo indeed is not a proper miser in the story, but only in Lucius' mind, it only proves once more that Lucius unknowingly succumbs to the expectations he has from comedy: since Milo is introduced by a prologue-like figure as a miser, he—in Lucius' mind—indeed has to be one. Thus Lucius behaves according to comic commonplaces, even if they are only the results of his own creative imagination.

Since Loukios in the *Onos* was given dinner by his host, he is also very unlikely to have gone fish-shopping (as Lucius does in *Met.* 1.24ff.) in the Greek original, which makes both the fish-trampling scene and also Milo's extreme stinginess an Apuleian invention. These farcical additions align with the overall comic atmosphere with its Plautine allusions created by Apuleius, which is not there in the Greek epitome.

Some comic potential is already there in the Greek epitome, such as the hint that Hipparchos keeps only one slave, which may have inspired Apuleius to work comic features into the potential given by the original story. The additions made by Apuleius are clearly taken from comedy, particularly Roman comedy, and the allusions to *Aulularia* and *Curculio* are explicitly chosen to establish a comic setting.

Pamphile

Another amusing inversion of comedy is found in Milo's wife.⁸⁹ She at first remains the unnamed *uxor* of Milo; it is only after she becomes the central

⁸⁴ The *Onos* contains more examples of occasions when speech appears to have been summarized, e.g. *Onos* 51.

⁸⁵ Van Mal-Maeder (1995: esp. 104ff.) for this conflicting depiction of Milo and his house.

⁸⁶ Van Mal-Maeder (1995: 114).

⁸⁷ Van Mal-Maeder (1995: 112f.).

⁸⁸ But cf. the lack of furniture in Milo's household in *Met.* 1.23, which seems real.

⁸⁹ Status of wives and courtesans in New Comedy in general: Fantham (1975).

aim of Lucius' interest, when Byrrhena describes her character in *Met.* 2.5, that her name, Pamphile,⁹⁰ (which translates as either 'loved by all' in the more natural translation, or 'loving all') is mentioned.

This, however, is a stock character name for a young and faithful woman in comedy.⁹¹ A 'Pamphile' may be a harp-player,⁹² but more often (and so far whenever a Pamphile occurs in a speaking part) she is a freeborn woman and usually the victim of the *adulescens*' assault and thus later to become his wife. The several freeborn Pamphiles in extant comedy often (*Stichus* is an exception) share this fate: in Menander's *Epitrepontes*, the faithful and dignified wife Pamphile⁹³ was wronged unknowingly by her future husband before the beginning of the play, and bears his unjustified suspicions as to her virtue without complaint; in Terence's *Adelphoe*, the young girl Pamphila in humble circumstances is violated by the young man, but loves him dearly and later marries him.⁹⁴ Pamphila in the *Stichus* faithfully waits for three years for her husband to come back from a sea journey, a constancy that the reader will hardly expect from the self-confessed promiscuous women in Milo's house.⁹⁵

Apuleius pays attention to finding apt names for his characters, which are often more meaningful or significant than those of the Greek original. This procedure corresponds to Plautus' adaptation of Menander's uninstructive names into more flamboyant and characterizing names. This can be seen for example in Plautus' adaptations of Menander's *Dis Exapaton* and *Synaristosai*, where in both cases Plautus changes the names of some of the persons involved. Plautus (unlike Terence) delights in giving his characters exuberant speaking names indicative of their stock character and individual personality.

⁹⁰ A summary of the discussion of Pamphile's name in van Mal-Maeder (1998: 125f., 2001: 119) (with further literature); Cf. Austin (1922: 43).

⁹¹ Brown (1987: 195) analyses the names of male characters in Menander and comes to the conclusion that 'Not *all* names in Menander, then, were associated with a particular mask and a particular personality.' (his *italics*) This particular name, however, seems to be mostly used in comedy for freeborn young women in trouble, although it could also be a courtesan name in real life. A free Pamphile appeared in Men. *Epit.*; Plaut. *Stich.*; Ter. *Ad.* and *Eun.* Cf. Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 291).

⁹² Such as the Pamphile in *Phormio*, who never appears on stage, but who seems to have a true love relationship with the young man Phaedia who frees her for thirty minae (cf. *Phorm.* 82, 310, 510, 558 etc.).

⁹³ Cf. Neumann's positive verdict (1958): 'Pamphile Epitr. ist eine ideal gezeichnete Figur;' (p. 20).

⁹⁴ Cf. *Ad.* 295ff.—The same name is borne by the girl in the *Eunuchus* who is Thais' supposed sister, but later recognized as a freeborn citizen and then married to her seducer (*Eun.* 888f.). She never appears on stage, but her name 'seems to have been favored by Terence as particularly suitable for his heroines' (Austin, 1922: 120).

⁹⁵ For Photis' amatory abilities: *Met.* 2.7 etc.

In comedy, characters are easily identifiable as stock characters, as freeborn married women versus slaves or courtesans, by their names and their masks.⁹⁶ This comic character might have worn a particular mask in Menander, but in Apuleius there is no description of her appearance or 'mask' present to help the readers to identify Pamphile's type.⁹⁷ The theatre audience might easily have guessed certain stock features from her name, and Apuleius uses his readers' expectations and inverts them: Pamphile is not the faithful wife of Plautus' *Stichus*, with whom she shares her name, but quite the opposite, as the text explicitly states (*Met.* 2.5):

Nam simul quemque conspexerit speciosae formae iuvenem, venustate eius sumitur et ilico in eum et oculum et animum detorquet. serit blanditias, invadit spiritum, amoris profundi pedicis aeternis alligat.

(Then as soon as she catches sight of any handsome young man, she is captivated by his charms, and at once focuses her eyes and her attention on him. She sows the seeds of allurements, dominates his will, and proceeds to imprison him in eternal bonds of deep love.)

This pun is far from being 'obvious' and over-explained in this passage.⁹⁸ Her name is wilfully misinterpreted, in the opposite sense to the usual meaning it has in comedy. 'Pamphile' is not the virtuous virgin who cannot help being raped at a public festival, but rather her opposite, who by her own will overcomes the surrounding males by force, magic, and threats. She is not 'loved by all', but 'loving all': her name is interpreted in the active rather than passive sense. The comic character's supposed infidelity and real innocence is set in contrast to Milo's wife, since there is no indication in the text that her husband harbours any suspicions as to her promiscuity or her magical practices.⁹⁹

She is seemingly innocent, but is in fact debauched, turning the informed theatre-goer's and reader's expectations upside down for comic effect. So besides making a pun on a particularly suitable name, Apuleius also alludes to comic commonplaces and uses his reader's knowledge of them. Pamphile, who in comedy is a faithful and loving woman, mostly married or to be married, but in one instance also a (faithful) *meretrix*, thus can easily take over characteristics of the *uxor* and the *meretrix* of comedy intermittently or at the same time. Unfaithful wives feature widely in adultery mimes, which

⁹⁶ Krieter-Spiro (1997: 52).

⁹⁷ Brown (1987) maintains that masks can only give the audience a general idea about the character, such as age, profession, social status etc. (cf. p. 190, *passim*). But he would accept that the name in combination with the mask would have marked Pamphile as a *matrona* or respectable girl in contrast to a courtesan.

⁹⁸ Thus Hijmans (1978b: 110).

⁹⁹ In *Met.* 2.11, Milo reacts disbelievingly to Pamphile's prophecy of bad weather, which he would not if he knew of her magic abilities.

represent in some ways the inversion of this stereotyping from comedy. The stories of Apul. *Met.* 9 are probably inspired by this genre, where a sophisticated young lover and a clever wife cheat her stupid husband,¹⁰⁰ played by the *stupidus*, often resulting in the young lover having to hide in a box.¹⁰¹ Without discussing Book 9 in particular, it is clear that Apuleius there, by skilfully combining the diverse tales into narratives within narratives, goes beyond the appeal of the usually very simple mime plots and achieves a more sophisticated, literary version of the genre.¹⁰²

By inverting his readers' expectations, Apuleius plays on comic conventions as well. Terence's Thais (*Eunuchus*) or Menander's Habrotonon (*Epitrepontes*), for example, may have been courtesans, but they have some redeeming characteristics. They have been, perhaps exaggeratedly, called *bonae meretrices* or 'tarts with hearts' (Don. *ad Ter. Hec.* 840).¹⁰³ Menander often enough plays around with expected stereotypes of his characters. The unusual courtesans or lovelorn soldiers (*Misoumenos*, *Perikeiromene*, *Sikyoniotes* etc.) and slaves (*Persa*, the original of which is not by Menander), can, to some extent, be portrayed as 'out of character',¹⁰⁴ although other stock characters nevertheless retain the main features of their basic stock type: Thais, although sometimes generous, wants to pursue her own advantage by slyly calculated and applied generosity, while the soldier in the *Misoumenos* is sympathetic but still boastful, and the slave in the *Persa* sympathetic but still cunning, though both love their girls genuinely.¹⁰⁵ Menander was capable of both presenting the stereotype on stage as expected (Bias in *Kolax* is an archetypal braggard), and subtly manipulating audience expectations of his stock characters.

Pamphile, however, has nothing at all in common with her stock-characteristic predecessor: she is unfaithful and venomous. Apuleius uses this name to invert his readers' expectations completely, preparing them for

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Kehoe (1984) for the adultery mime, and Ov. *Trist.* 2.497–500, 505f.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Iuv. 6.42ff. Evidence for adultery mimes in the 2nd cent. AD: Cf. *SHA M. Ant.* 29.1f.

¹⁰² Reynolds (1946) assumes a rather simple plot for the mimes; Kehoe (1984) is more sceptical and argues for more sophisticated and diverse plot developments. Wiemken (1972), working from the parallel in Apul. *Met.* 10.2–12, argues for an integration of trial scenes into the mime plot, and Kehoe (1984: 98ff.) argues convincingly for large-scale productions with a large cast in order to stage trial scenes.—On the sophisticated and intertwined character of the adultery tales in *Met.* 9 cf. Bechtel (1995).

¹⁰³ On the character: e.g. Gilula (1980), who however denies that any *meretrices* are *bonae*. Thais is grasping, cf. *Eun.* 79f., 163–9, 1075, and Habrotonon, the property of a pimp, does not have to be grasping.

¹⁰⁴ Duckworth (1994: 259f.).

¹⁰⁵ On the character traits of soldiers: Krieter-Spiro's (1997: 158f. summary) For a detailed study of audience sympathies for soldiers in Greek and Roman New Comedy cf. Brown (2004), who points out that not all soldiers on stage are boastful, but some are rather sympathetic young men who also happen to be soldiers.

the notion that not everything in Milo's house is as it seems, warning that possibly very uncomic events are in store for the hero of the story: in Milo's *domus comica* the expectation is that there should be a final union with Photis rather than perilous magic.

The portrayal of the marriage of Milo and Pamphile is another inversion of the comic couple. That there should be problems between a married couple is a comic commonplace. Menander's Pamphile is (wrongfully) under suspicion of infidelity from her husband who has stopped living with her. On the whole, marriage, especially that of the older generation, to whom Milo certainly and Pamphile possibly belong, is portrayed in comedy in a less than harmonious way. Apuleius' Milo, however, does not suspect his wife at all of infidelity, although he should have every reason to do so. In comic terms, Milo must be a *senex*, because he has ostensibly been married for a long time. The *senex* is, however, never happily married;¹⁰⁶ in fact, quite often he is lecherous (cf. the *senes* of the *Casina* and the *Mercator*). There is however no hint of any problems between Milo and Pamphile before the text concentrates on Pamphile's magical and sexual eccentricities, of which Milo seems completely unaware. Although the comic *senex amans* may be comically trying to be unfaithful to his wife, the elderly matrons of comedy never betray their husbands, and Lucius is careful not to get involved with his host's wife (*Met.* 2.6: 'probi Milonis genialem torum religios <us> suspice', ('scrupulously respect the good Milo's marriage-bed')). They usually also have children, of whom there is no evidence in Milo and Pamphile's relationship.¹⁰⁷

Adultery on the wife's side, an important ingredient in Apuleius' world, is 'unpardonable' in Greek comedy.¹⁰⁸ 'Wives' planning to commit adultery in Plautus (*Mil.* 1400f., possibly *Bacch.* 851f.) are courtesans pretending to be adulterous wives in order to further the intrigue. Husbands, however, may commit adultery without any legal or social problem.¹⁰⁹ In comedy, however, they are usually unsuccessful if they are married and found out by their wives, so that their adultery is prevented.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ On the *senex amator* in general: Ryder (1984). Only *Stichus* and *Amphitruo* produce counter-examples of happy marriages, and these marriages are still young. For married old men: Webster (1974: 36f.).

¹⁰⁷ e.g. Men. fr. 276, *Pk.* 1013f., *Sam.* 727.—Wives are never unfaithful in comedy; the avoidance of bastardy was one of the reasons for the close observation of female chastity (cf. Fantham (1975: 47)).

¹⁰⁸ Fantham (1975: 71 with n. 56).

¹⁰⁹ Cf. the *amatores senes* in Plautus' *Asinaria*, *Casina* and *Mercator*, Syra's complaint about double standards in *Merc.* 817–29 and Cato's double standard in Gell. NA. 10.23.5.

¹¹⁰ In the *Metamorphoses*, Pamphile at least sometimes seems to be successful with her adulteries, although her love-magic which results in Lucius' having to fight with the wine bags has no success in this particular instance.

With Milo and Pamphile, however, it seems to be the complete opposite. There is no mention of any infidelity on Milo's part, and he even seems to be completely unaware of his wife's illicit doings. She, however, is reported to lust after every young man she sees. Thus Pamphile takes over the role of an unfaithful wife, and of a *meretrix* with many lovers, both at the same time.

There must be a system behind this playing around with the reader's expectations. Apuleius does not simply write a comedy in prose. Instead, he goes along with his reader's expectations up to a certain moment in his story, and then departs from it. He sets the scene quite literally within a comic house, but stocks it with unusual characters. This is not only the usual principle of *imitatio et aemulatio* ('competitive imitation') in adapting a Greek original, but is also necessary to his generic understanding of the novel he is writing. Lucius' adventures are not only epic in their shape as a long narrative of an initiatory journey and a man's recognition of himself, but also comic in their character portrayal and content.

Photis

Just as Pamphile is represented as a mixture of the troublesome old wife and a promiscuous courtesan, her slave Photis also displays a kind of double character. The parallelism between Photis and her mistress Pamphile which is also expressed in verbal echoes¹¹¹ is similar to that of the comic pairings of beautiful mistresses (courtesans) and their equally beautiful *ancillae scitulae* or 'attractive maidservants', like Erotium and her *ancilla* in the *Menaechmi*, and especially Acroteutium and Milphidippa in the *Miles Gloriosus*. A sexual encounter, however, as Photis and Lucius have, is more appropriate to a *meretrix* in comedy, where the love interest is linked not so much with the *ancillae scitulae* as with their mistresses.¹¹² Photis takes character traits from both stock figures in comedy, which mingle in her according to the needs of her function in the plot. Thus it is necessary to point out separately the respective characteristics of both stock characters in her, and after that to show how both are merged to form a unified image of a cunning, beautiful, and seductive slave.

Photis as an *ancilla scitula* or attractive maidservant

In Apuleius' contemporary society and in an economy based on slavery, having only one slave appears unrealistic and fictitious. The reference to

¹¹¹ Similar imagery for Photis and Pamphile: van Mal-Maeder (1998: 130 and *passim*).

¹¹² Both the *ancillae* mentioned above are flirtatious, but their mistresses remain the love interests.

Milo's keeping only one single female slave is (as we have seen) likely to be a literary allusion. Menander's female slaves are mostly old nurses or servants, such as Sophrone in the *Epitrepontes* or Simiche in the *Dyskolos*. Usually misers live with one single female attendant who has to take care of the whole household and is nevertheless treated quite badly. She is usually already old, and sometimes worldly-wise.¹¹³ Thus Smikrines' slave Sophrone (Men. *Epit.*) or Euclio's Staphyla (Plaut. *Aul.*) are able to keep their mistresses' (Pamphile in Men. *Epit.*, Phaedria in Plaut. *Aul.*) pregnancies unknown to their fathers, for example *Aul.* 74f.: 'neque iam quo pacto celem erilis filiae | probrum, propinqua partitudo quoi appetit | queo comminisci'. ('I cannot imagine how to hide the disgrace of my young mistress, whose time to give birth is so near.'). Photis' mistress has a guilty secret, too, which both Pamphile and Photis manage to hide from Milo. Pamphile's secret knowledge of magic, which, although it similarly involves overstepping the required border of female chastity, is somewhat different from that of the wronged young girls in comedy. Yet it is easily shared with her attendant Photis, as she for example says about herself: 'mihi domina singula monstravit, quae possunt rursus in facies hominum tales figuras reformare' ('my mistress has shown me each and every substance that can restore to human form those who have adopted such shapes'; *Met.* 3.23).

The comic stage door, if kept by a female attendant, is usually opened by an old slave woman (for example, *Curc.* 76: 'anus hic solet cubitare custos ianitrix', 'an old hag usually sleeps here as the doorkeeper'). When Lucius knocks on Milo's door, he is indeed invited inside by a slave, but she is referred to as *adulescentula quaedam* ('a young girl'; *Met.* 1.22). With all the expectation Apuleius has created so far, the reader has been led to expect an old woman. The slave, however, turns out to be a young girl. Since Photis has to be both young and beautiful for the continuation of the intrigue, Apuleius here digresses from the usual comedy setting.

Photis as a young slave points towards an intertext with Roman comedy; young domestic female slaves in Menander have no speaking roles.¹¹⁴ The introduction of speaking young slave girls is if anything a Plautine invention. In Plautus their roles are important for the plot. Menander cannot be the source of the re-shaping of Photis' character here. This adaptation of the vulgar Palaistra of the lost Greek original into the cunning slave Photis together with the change of her name and character must be Apuleius' reworking, perhaps using the *servus callidus* character so prominent in

¹¹³ Old slaves and their masters: Webster (1974: 40).

¹¹⁴ Female slaves: Krieter-Spiro (1997: 34–43).

Plautine plays and adding to it the religious or allegorical connotations of the name 'Photis'.¹¹⁵

Plautus' cunning *ancilla* is also willing to be flirtatious in order to help with the intrigue; Milphidippa in *Mil.* 794 is a good case study. Palaestrio, the cunning slave, asks: 'sed ecqua ancillast illi?' ('Does she have a maid?')—and receives the *senex*' reassuring answer: 'est prime cata' ('Yes, and she is very clever.'). Milphidippa needs beauty and wit to take a leading part in the intrigue, and is well equipped with both, cf. her confident 'Iam est ante aedis circus ubi sunt ludi faciundi mihi' ('Now in front of the house is the circus where I am to play my games'; *Mil.* 991), and the *miles*' appraisal of her looks (*Mil.* 1003ff.). Milphidippa uses her seductiveness in order to further the plot, when in *Mil.* 1027f. Palaestrio instructs her to use her charms on the gullible *miles*: 'conlaudato formam et faciem et virtutes commemorato' ('Praise his appearance and face and talk about his brave deeds'), and she replies: 'ad eam rem habeo omnem aciem, tibi ut dudum iam demonstravi' ('I have all the acuteness needed for this, as I have already showed you a while ago').

Lucius knows well that in order to find out more about the mistress' magical habits, he has to make friends with the maid (*Met.* 2.6):

aufer[s] formidines pueriles, com<m>inus cum re ipsa naviter congregere et a nexu quidam venerio hospitibus tuae tempera et probi Milonis genialem torum religios<us> suspice, verum enim vero Fotis famula petatur enixe. *nam et forma scitula et moribus ludicra et prorsus argutula est.*

(Dismiss your childish fears, come to grips with the issue at close quarters and without cowardice. You must steer clear of any love-relationship with your hostess, and scrupulously respect the good Milo's marriage-bed. Make a bee-line instead for the maidservant Photis. *She is attractive, she has amusing ways, and she is quite sharp.*)

This description links Photis closely with her Plautine ancestresses: the use of diminutives is Plautine,¹¹⁶ and *ludicra* not only refers to the *sermo amatorius* ('language of love') as found in Latin love elegy,¹¹⁷ but also to the metaphor of 'games' commonly used for the intrigue as for example by Milphidippa (*Mil.* 991). There may even be a direct reminiscence of Plautine passages, as '*scitulus* is only read in Apuleius and Plautus'.¹¹⁸ Although Lucius does not yet know how active a role Photis will take in the intrigue against Pamphile, where she will have to delude her mistress and smuggle Lucius into her mistress' private chambers, he already makes sure that she has the mental and physical capacity to be of aid to him.

¹¹⁵ On the name cf. n. 149 below.

¹¹⁶ Bernhard (1927: 135f.).

¹¹⁷ Thus van Mal-Maeder (1998) and (2001) ad loc.

¹¹⁸ Cf. De Jonge (1941: ad loc.) and Ch. 6 nn. 21 and 22 above.

It is remarkable that Lucius' meetings with Photis are dominated by the presence of food: their first encounter happens while she is preparing dinner (*Met.* 2.7). There is no indication of food being prepared in *Onos* 5 and 6, and the link between eroticism and food in the *Metamorphoses* goes along with the overall stress on food and Lucius' interest in it in Apuleius' version. When Photis prepares the meal for the family in *Met.* 2.7, Apuleius manages to load the situation with comic references, partly by using culinary words found in Plautine food catalogues.¹¹⁹ The words used in this scene are not all Plautine, but besides the food references, another parallel with Plautus is evident:

sui<s> parabat viscum fartim concisum et pulpam frustratim consectam [ambacu pascuae iurulenta] et, *quod naribus iam inde ariolabar*, tucetum perquamapidissimum. (*Met.* 2.7)

(She was cooking minced pork for stuffing, and slices of meat, and some very spicy sausage of which I had already caught a whiff. [lit.: 'what I had already divined with my nose.'])

Pulpa does not occur in Plautus and Terence, but *pulpamentum* is found several times.¹²⁰ It is close enough to be considered comic, and *pulpamentum* would disturb the verbal balance with *viscum*. The *pulmentum* Lucius uses a little later to describe Photis' food is found in Plautus, too.¹²¹ The only word with no parallel in the cooking imagery in Plautus is *tucetum*, one of Apuleius' standard words for food.¹²² Even if this catalogue of food words did not evoke a primarily comic context, there is a conscious Plautine quotation in Lucius' words, taken from the dialogue between the witty courtesan Acroteleutium and her *ancilla scitula* Milphidippa, two Plautine stage figures that Apuleius generally seems to liken Photis to:

MILPHIDIPPA quur non pultas?
ACROTELEUTIUM quia non est intus quem ego volo.—MI.
 qui scis?—AC. scio de olefactu;
nam odore nasum sentiat, si intus sit.—PYRGOPOLYNICES
 hariolatur. (Plaut. *Mil.* 1254ff.)

(MILPHIDIPPA Why don't you knock?—ACROTELEUTIUM Because the one that I want is not in.—MI. How do you know?—AC. I know because of the smell. *Because my nose would notice the smell* if he were inside.—PYRGOPOLYNICES *She does divination!*)

¹¹⁹ Cf. Lowe (1985) on cooks in Plautus, May (1998: *passim*) on those in Apuleius.

¹²⁰ *Curc.* 90, *Mil.* 653, *Pseud.* 947, *Stich.* 713; *Ter. Eun.* 426.

¹²¹ *Aul.* 316, *Mil.* 349, *Pseud.* 220, *Rud.* 937.

¹²² *Apul. Met.* 2.7, 5.15, 7.11, 9.22.

Plautus, too,¹²³ combines the idea of divination with smelling, and this link between a Plautine catalogue of food and the Plautine reference to soothsaying strongly suggest that Photis is portrayed as a cunning slave.

Photis *meretrix*

The first meal Lucius has with Photis is described in the usual way an *adulescens* would deal with his favourite *meretrix* ('courtesan'): some food, lots of wine and a couple of garlands, which could consist of roses. This is not unique to comedy, but can also be found in epigrams.¹²⁴ However, the preparation of a *cena* with the courtesan's and the *adulescens'* participation is an important ingredient in comedy. Of the many examples in Plautus, compare Erotium's sumptuous preparations for a meal with Menaechmus, or the on-stage *symposium* in the *Mostellaria*.¹²⁵

In his meeting with Photis, Lucius takes over many characteristics from the comic stock figure of the young man in love, who, despite being a free man, falls in love with a slave girl or a courtesan. Although there may be some sexual encounters between *ancillae* and *adulescentes* in Roman comedy,¹²⁶ the main female part which provides a love interest in comedy is that of the courtesan. Photis, while never quite losing her attributes as a slave girl, also takes over some of her typical characterization from the moment that her future role as Lucius' lover becomes clear: the change from an unimportant slave girl into the love interest is evident in Lucius' narrative, when after deciding to seduce Photis in order to get at her mistress, he calls her 'caram meam Photidem' ('my dear Photis').¹²⁷ Although it could be argued that at first Photis is only Lucius' means to find out more about her mistress' habits, the scene of their mutual seduction is nevertheless highly erotic, and undoubtedly Lucius, once he calls Photis *cara*, ceases to see her only as a means to further his plans.

The language Apuleius uses in the seduction scene is mainly taken from Plautine comedy.¹²⁸ Photis' speech to Lucius, which warns him playfully of

¹²³ Also noted by van Mal-Maeder (2001: 147).

¹²⁴ Cf. Asclepiades 5.185; Licht (1931: 337f.).

¹²⁵ *Men.* 181–225 *et passim*, *Most.* 307–406, etc.

¹²⁶ e.g. the unnamed *ancilla* of Erotium (*Men.* 539ff.) is willing to flirt with Menaechmus II for a pair of earrings. She however does not succeed, and there is no evidence in the text that his twin brother had shown any interest in the girl.

¹²⁷ *Met.* 2.7; cf. van Mal-Maeder (2001: 143f.) on the change in Lucius' mind, but without comic interpretation.

¹²⁸ Detailed discussion: van Mal-Maeder (1998: 37) and (2001: ad locc.), who also points out the reverberations of Latin love elegy in this scene.

her dangerous love in a seductive way (*Met.* 2.7), as well as the description of her appearance, includes several diminutives; this is significant for the language of love in Latin, the *sermo amatorius*.¹²⁹ She describes her love as honey and gall, which is a standard comedy theme (*Met.* 2.10):

‘Heus tu, scolastice’, ait [sc. Photis], ‘dulce et amarum gustulum capis. cave ne nimia mellis dulcedine diutinam bilis amaritudinem contrahas.’

(‘Hey there, schoolboy’, she said, ‘the savoury dish you’re sampling is bitter as well as sweet. Just watch out; *that honey which tastes so sweet may bring on a lengthy attack of bitter bile.*’)

The *topos* of love being honey and gall¹³⁰ at the same time can be traced in Plautus to the speeches of witty courtesans; for instance, the two courtesans of the *Cistellaria* (68–71) consider love as bitter and sweet:¹³¹

SELENIUM eho an amare occipere amarum est, opsecro?

GYMNASIUM namque ecastor Amor et *melle et felle* est fecundissimus;
gustui dat dulce, amarum ad satietatem usque oggerit.

(SELENIUM Why, then, please, is it bitter to engage in love?—GYMNASIUM Because Love is very abundant in both honey and gall, it gives sweetness to the taste, but piles up bitterness until you are full.)

This passage shows verbal parallels, and that implies that Photis is well versed in the kind of language commonly used by Plautine courtesans.¹³² She is not merely a simple slave to her amorous mistress, but also seductive of her own volition. Apuleius lets her use this comic language to introduce her new status into the seduction scene, to turn her from a subsidiary character, a door-opener and subordinate to her mistress, into a *femme fatale* in her own right. Photis cunningly warns Lucius that he is not the one who is seducing her, but she is an experienced courtesan doing what is expected of her.

Lucius, the young man, should know that this kind of love is potentially dangerous and bitter, since *adulescentes*, in comedy, use the same similes of bittersweet love and honey and gall;¹³³ for example, the *adulescens* Calidorus speaks about his love for his *amica* in the *Pseudolus* as follows (*Pseud.* 63): ‘dulce amarumque una nunc misces mihi’ (‘now you mix for me the *sweet and*

¹²⁹ Cf. van Mal-Maeder (1998) and (2001) ad loc.

¹³⁰ Cf. also Sappho 130 Lobel and Page, where love is ‘bittersweet’ (γλυκύπικρον). The image is also found in Plato (*Phlb.* 46c), but Callebat (1968: 500) considers a Plautine allusion likely.

¹³¹ Apuleius also uses it in a public speech within the Carthaginian theatre in *Flor.* 18.11.

¹³² On similarities between Apuleius’ *sermo amatorius* and Plautus, especially in this scene, cf. Mattiacci (1986: 196ff.). A similarity she has with real-life prostitutes of Rome is the *Venus pendula* (*Met.* 2.17), a position favoured by prostitutes: van Mal-Maeder (2001: 413ff.).

¹³³ It is a commonplace, cf. Catull. 68.18; cf. Fordyce (1961: 346).

the bitter together') and (694) 'dulcia atque amara apud te sum elocutus omnia' ('Now I have told you everything, *the sweet and the bitter*'). Another young man puns on *amor* and *amara* (Plaut. *Trin.* 259f):

quamquam illud est *dulce*, esse et bibere,
Amor *amara* dat tamen

(although it is *sweet* to eat and drink, Love still gives *bitter* things.)

Also the young man Diniarchus complains to the courtesan's maid Astaphium of a courtesan's words dipped in honey but actions dipped in gall.¹³⁴ A courtesan's profession naturally requires a certain amount of acting proficiency as well as coaxing flattery.¹³⁵ Both assets will be necessary for Lucius' plans.

Although exceptional real-life courtesans were well known for their wit,¹³⁶ Photis by using the *sermo amatorius* of comedy and Latin love elegy rather self-consciously aligns herself with literary creations. Plautus makes wide use of *double entendre* in the speeches of his courtesans, for example the dialogue of Pasicompsa with the *senex* Lysimachus in *Merc.* 518ff. Likewise, Lucius and Photis' encounter is full of *doubles entendres* which they express in their dialogue,¹³⁷ and of further Plautine references: for example, Lucius calls Photis 'mea festivitas' ('my heart's delight', *Met.* 2.10), an expression of the *sermo amatorius* in comedy.¹³⁸ Photis is described as a 'lepida alioquin et dicacula puella' ('that pert and witty girl'; *Met.* 2.7): *lepidus* is a word of the *sermo amatorius*, which is very frequently used in Plautus *Bacchides*, in the speech of courtesans,¹³⁹ and *dicaculus* is Plautine.¹⁴⁰

A courtesan, in comedy and in real life, had to be quick-witted and amusing. She offered a very high standard of entertainment, and her trade had some status in ancient Greece.¹⁴¹ Photis and Palaistra (in the *Onos*) however, being slaves to their mistresses, are far from being professional

¹³⁴ Plaut. *Truc.* 178–80.

¹³⁵ Krieter-Spiro (1997) 167.—In Plautus cf. the irresistible *Bacchides* in Act v.

¹³⁶ For the employment of quotations from the poets cf. Ov. *Ars* 3.311 and Thais' quoting of Euripides (Ath. 13.585e). The two Laides were also well known for their wit. Cf. Licht (1931: 346ff.) for references.

¹³⁷ *Doubles entendres* in *Met.* 2.7 are e.g. *vasculum* ('little vessel'), *ollulam* ('that wee pot'), and *digitum intingere* ('to let him stick his finger in'). Cf. van Mal-Maeder (1998) and (2001) ad locc.

¹³⁸ Cf. Plaut. *Cas.* 135, 577, *Poen.* 389 and Gell. 10.3.4. Cf. Mattiacci (1986: 195ff.) on Apuleius' use of the Plautine *sermo amatorius* in the *Metamorphoses*. On *sermo amatorius* in Plautus cf. Flury (1968).

¹³⁹ Nineteen instances; cf. Lodge (1904–) s.v. for the occurrences in Plautus' *sermo amatorius*.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. now Keulen (2003a: 202); Callebat (1968: 511), too, claims allusion to Plautus.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Licht (1931: 339f.); Davidson (1997: 73–136) for a detailed analysis of the different statuses of women 'prostitutes' in the Greek world. For Rome, cf. McGinn (1998).

courtesans, as they do not earn their living in that profession, and as slave girls should not be expected to share its literary education. When using imagery from Roman comedy and neoteric poetry and indulging in witty wordplay, Photis steps out of her role as a slave and takes over some features of the courtesans in Roman comedy, whose status might vary from slavegirl (*Pseudolus*) to a freedwoman or *liberta* (*Miles Gloriosus*) or a freeborn woman (*Cistellaria*).¹⁴² Although what Photis does might be reminiscent of the real-life courtesan, she is nevertheless depicted in a literary way. Palaistra's scene in the *Onos*, which might be quite close to the lost original, strikes a completely different, coarser, tone with its wrestling metaphors.¹⁴³ The whole scene in the *Onos* is cruder, and bears no traces of a Greek equivalent of love elegy. Clearly Apuleius' adaptation of Plautine language is his own addition, without any precedent in the Greek original.

This might also be the reason for the change of name from the Greek *Palaistra* to the Roman Photis. 'Photis' is singular and primarily not comic, unlike 'Palaestra', a name borne by the heroine of the *Rudens*. The change of name in Apuleius then also may have some meaning. Scobie¹⁴⁴ argues: 'The Greek name would also have had the disadvantage for Apul, of being associated with prostitutes'.¹⁴⁵ He, however, only gives Palaestra's Greek etymology. The name may have been associated with real-life courtesans in ancient Greece,¹⁴⁶ but the only instance in Greek and Roman comedy we have so far is a different issue: Palaestra is of uncertain status in the *Rudens*, since she is a freeborn slavegirl¹⁴⁷ who, although belonging to a *leno*, turns out to be a citizen girl in the end, which enables her to marry the young man she loves.¹⁴⁸ So in addition to using the light-metaphor ($\phi\omega\varsigma$) that the name-change to 'Photis' is commonly thought to imply,¹⁴⁹ Apuleius also

¹⁴² Cf. Neumann (1958: 15ff.) for more examples.

¹⁴³ Cf. van Mal-Maeder (1998: 143f.) and (2001: 266ff.).—Wrestling-metaphors as euphemisms for sex can, however, be found in Old Comedy: cf. Aristophanes *Pax* 894ff., and Adams (1982: 157). Taillardat (1965: 102) indicates that the metaphor occurs only here in Aristophanes.

¹⁴⁴ (1975: ad loc. p. 126).

¹⁴⁵ With reference to Thierfelder (1962).

¹⁴⁶ Among the nicknames for courtesans listed in Licht (1931: 410) 'wrestler and wrestling place' occur. cf. again Adams (1982: 157ff.), who notes that Apuleius removes the explicitness of the Greek text.

¹⁴⁷ Plaut. *Rud.* 39ff., 217.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. her positive characterization by Neumann (1958: 16f.).

¹⁴⁹ Other reasons for the change of name: Scobie (1975: 125f.). For the manifold explanations of the name 'Photis' cf. Scobie (1978: 59); van der Paardt (1971: 101ff.); Sandy (1978: 136f.) and the survey in van Mal-Maeder (1998: 143) and (2001: 138). The derivation from $\phi\omega\varsigma$ is a rival to that from *foveo* / *fotus* 'to heat up', but quite persuasive. Cf. Sandy (1997: 248) on Persis (*Phoenikika*) and Photis as courtesans. He argues that Lollianos' Persis is very likely to be a courtesan, and that Photis' name ending in *-is* points in a similar direction; he names Briseis, Thais, Chrysis (Petronius) as parallels.

avoids the misleading, though comic, name Palaestra. Any link with the Plautine Palaestra would have caused unwanted associations of an anagnorisis and marriage.

Instead, he manages to link Photis with a comic slavegirl at the same time as with a courtesan in another way, viz. by recurring to her outward appearance. Her description includes a long *encomium* on her hair. Given the fact that slave girls in comedy generally had short hair,¹⁵⁰ it is particularly telling that Photis, just when she takes over the role of the courtesan of the plot, is described as having skilfully arranged long hair: after a general introduction into why he thinks that the hair is the most important, distinctive and beautiful adornment of a woman (*Met.* 2.8f.), Lucius describes Photis' hair in detail:

Sed in mea Photide non operosus, sed inornatus ornatus addebat gratiam. Uberes enim crines leniter emissos et cervice pendulos ac dein per colla dispositos sensimque sinuato patagio residentes paulisper ad finem conglobatos in summum verticem nodus adstrinxerat. (*Met.* 2.9)

(My Photis, however, had not fussed over hers, and yet its tousled arrangement lent her added charm. Her abundant hair had been let hang soft and free down from her head over her neck, and having rested briefly on the golden border of her dress, it had finally been gathered and fastened in a knot on top of her head.)

Quite often Apuleius' *encomium* of Photis' hair is set alongside the description of that of Isis, but although there are some verbal repetitions, Van Mal-Maeder¹⁵¹ has shown that it can be interpreted separately, without its Isiac counterpart in mind. In her commentary¹⁵² she notes that lack of adornment was often the preferred hairstyle in the *sermo eroticus*, and she lists, amongst other instances mainly from Latin love elegy, Ter. *Haut.* 285, 288–91:

ipsam offendimus ...
sine auro, tum ornatam ita uti quae ornantur sibi,
nulla mala re esse expolitam muliebri
capillu' pexu' prolixus circum caput
reiectu' neglegenter

(We found her [...] with] no sign of jewels, or anything beyond what you'd see on women who dress only to please themselves, with none of these feminine refinements;

¹⁵⁰ Krieter-Spiero (1997: 184).—Contrast however the courtesan's maid, Pollux' mask n. 44, which sometimes seems to have a bun, cf. Webster, Green, and Seeberg (1995: i. 50f.).

¹⁵¹ (1998: 30f., 296ff.) (2001: 13f., 409ff. and ad loc.). She also gives a survey of the studies which take this view of Photis as an Anti-Isis (p. 296). Especially for the first-time reader this portrayal of Isis cannot be anticipated, and only for the second-time reader does the description of both women's coiffure gain the significance it has for the interpretation of Photis as the dispenser of 'black' or evil magic in contrast to Isis' 'white' and beneficial magic.

¹⁵² ad loc. p. 181f.

her hair not done up, but just combed down round her head and carelessly tossed back. trans. Radice, Penguin)

Other instances from Plautus could be added, for example *Most.* 254ff.

Since both the unadornedness, which makes Philematium in Plautus' *Mostellaria* and Antiphila in Terence's *Heautontimoroumenos* beautiful, and the *nodus* ('knot') are common features in love elegy, this instance of the hairstyle alone seems too uncertain to link Photis with a stage courtesan. But if it is taken together with her Plautine language, her wit and her use of comic metaphors generally linked with courtesan language, this might suffice to portray Photis as a cunning slavegirl accompanying her courtesan mistress, for example like Milphidippa in Plautus' *Miles*, who bears some similarities to her mistress.

7.4. CONCLUSION

When reshaping the Greek novel into the episode of Milo's house, Apuleius successfully manages to create a comic atmosphere. He must use the given plot of the story as it occurs in its outline, but he manages to embellish it with enough comic language as well as with stock figures and scenes to make his adaptation very Plautine.

At the same time, Apuleius plays with his reader: with all these comic references to stock characters and situations, starting from a door-knocking scene outside a stage-like house, with a *senex* presiding over a *cena*, his wife, a beautiful young girl, and an amorous young man, the direction the plot is to take if it were to follow typical comedy stories is clear. That, however, is the rub: although the *adulescens* does everything the right way and even manages to act his part and succumb to stage conventions and expectations, he does not end up getting the beautiful girl for himself. Instead, he is transformed into an ass and has to go on his *Odyssey*. Comedy for him is turned into epic and tragic misery, during which plot he is to endure torture and is often in fear of his life.

Another important twist in the story is the transformation of the young man's motives for seducing the girl: the love intrigue which constitutes the comedy plots is replaced with an intrigue connected with investigating magic. Lucius however manages to link up the two intrigues in his persuasion of Photis to use magic on him, so that he can be an even better lover to her: 'ut meae Veneri Cupido pinnatus adistam tibi.' ('I shall become a winged Cupid, drawing close to my Venus'; *Met.* 3.22). By linking magic with love, Apuleius manages to overcome the problems of his adaptation of the love plot of

comedy into a story of magic. The pursuit of the intrigue involved in getting what the hero desires most (the courtesan in comedy, the knowledge of magic in the *Metamorphoses*), is, however, developed in parallel terms: when Photis takes over the role of both the courtesan and the cunning slave at the same time, the young *serva callida* is willing and helpful with the intrigue against her older mistress, just as the slave in comedy always helps his young master against the older generation, even when he is the slave of the latter.¹⁵³

It has been shown that many Apuleian additions to the lost original have a comic subtext. The description of the house as well as Lucius' first encounter with its inhabitants is carefully shaped after Plautine comic conventions, both in the use of vocabulary and in the use of set comedy scenes. A reader who is aware of these comic conventions will easily recognize them and might anticipate the outcome of the following scenes. Such a reader is induced to compare the characters living in Milo's house with stock characters known from comedy and draw conclusions from this, especially since Lucius himself shows some comic features. It is important for Apuleius to have established his reader's expectations long before the actual plot of intrigues inside the house begins to develop. What, however, is going to happen in this *domus comica* is different from the plot of a normal comedy: Lucius, his parasitical traits temporarily moving into the background, becomes a comic young man in love and in need of the tricky slave cum courtesan Photis in order to achieve his ends, but he does not achieve them at all. Instead, he assumes a bestial shape with a bestial appetite for both food and stories, which he will keep up until his re-metamorphosis. In displaying the parasitical characteristics of voracity and willingness to flatter prospective patrons, Lucius is different from his counterpart in the *Onos*, who has none of these characteristics. This does not turn Lucius into a parasite, but it seems evident that Apuleius wanted to give his protagonist some distinctly comic features, and the parasite offers himself as the appropriate character. This comicization of the protagonist puts him into a distinctly dramatic, or even comic, context, which will be in the background throughout the whole novel.

¹⁵³ Cf. Tranio, the cunning slave of the *Mostellaria* (esp. ll. 25ff.).

The Risus Festival: Laughing at Laughter

8.1. INTRODUCTION

When Apuleius was accused of using love-magic to win over his wife Pudentilla together with her substantial dowry, he acquitted himself, so it seems, gloriously. He leaves us with the impression of a successful defence against a series of badly fabricated charges.

The trial at the Risus Festival in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, where the hero of the novel, Lucius, has to face similarly serious charges (in both cases a successful conviction would have led to a death-sentence), has often been compared to that of Apuleius himself in Sabratha.¹ Furthermore, both Lucius and Apuleius are, after their trials, offered statues by the population in their honour. The *Apologia* itself shows, as we have seen, besides its Ciceronian flavour, a considerable comic undertone; this is even more true of Apuleius' account of the Risus Festival in Book 3 of the *Metamorphoses*.

The Risus Festival is important for an analysis of comic elements in the *Metamorphoses* for several reasons: it is the first scene set in a theatrical building, and the first of a series of 'spectacles', of public displays of Lucius to an internal audience,² in a novel rich in the portrayal of this kind of entertainment.

8.2. COMEDY AND THEATRICAL SETTING

Motiventsprechungen

Riefstahl (1938: 71ff.), based on Junghanns (1932: 136ff.), points out that Apuleius often works with what he calls '*Motiventsprechungen*', repetitions of motifs throughout the novel. Thus, for example, in the narrative of the 'robber Haemus', the lady Plotina follows her husband in men's clothes

¹ Cf. e.g. Harrison (2000b: 9f.), Van der Paardt (1971: 89ff.), and my Ch. 4 above.

² Cf. Slater (2003) on spectacles in the *Metamorphoses*.

(*Met.* 7.6), and Haemus, in order to escape from an unlucky robbery, himself dons women's clothes in order to remain undetected (*Met.* 7.8). Riefstahl interprets these repetitions of motifs as Apuleius' attempt to create links in his main narrative with the episodes, to use them as a foreshadowing mechanism for further events, and to give unity to his novel—indeed, Haemus will later turn out to be a faithful rescuer of his own wife from captivity, just as Plotina in his story was an unswerving wife following her husband.

A similar *Motiventsprechung* with this kind of foreshadowing³ can be found in the use of theatrical settings.⁴ There are several scenes during the main narrative of the *Metamorphoses* which are set in the theatre, and they obviously correspond with each other. The first episode set in such a theatrical context is the Risus Festival in *Met.* 3.

Lucius stays in Hypata as the guest of Milo, and has started a romantic affair with his host's servant Photis. One evening, Lucius is invited out for dinner at his aunt Byrrhena's place in Hypata. Photis is concerned about his well-being and warns him to return home to Milo's house early, before dinner. She says that a group of drunken young men make the streets of Hypata unsafe, since they waylay travellers in the evenings. Lucius promises to be careful, but after a long dinner at Byrrhena's, filled with stories about strange witches and other magic in order to celebrate the evening of the festival of the god Risus (Laughter), who is only worshipped in Hypata, Lucius returns home rather late in the night, having had more than a glass too many to drink. On Milo's doorstep, he encounters three thugs who are battering at Milo's door in order to get in. Lucius, all hero, draws his sword and kills them all. A frightened Photis hears the racket and lets him into the house, where Lucius, exhausted, falls asleep on his bed. The next morning he realizes what he has done and fears for his life. Indeed, he is arrested for triple murder by the Hypatan magistrates and led through every street of the city like a sacrificial victim, to his trial in the forum.

Everybody on the roads, however, who sees Lucius, unaccountably breaks into loud laughter. The forum is too small for the crowd, and the trial which is to take place is immediately transposed to the theatre of Hypata, where Lucius is confronted with the cloth-covered bodies of the three victims and their female relatives, who accuse him of maliciously killing their breadwinners. Lucius has to give an impromptu defence speech, not keeping too strictly to the truth. The whole theatre is full of Hypatans, who all react the same way:

³ Cf. Krabbe (1989: 158ff.).

⁴ Riefstahl (1938: 75): 'In allen drei Szenen wird Lucius in der Öffentlichkeit zur Schau gestellt; beim ersten Mal ist er der Beschämte, beim zweiten Mal der Gefährdete, beim dritten Mal schließlich der Erlöste.'

they laugh heartily at the whole proceeding. The magistrates force Lucius to pull away the cloths from the dead bodies, and the bodies turn out to be empty wineskins, lacerated where the evening before Lucius had pierced them with his sword. Ashamed and aware that he was too drunk to notice the true identity of his 'victims', Lucius is dumbfounded. Milo leads him out of the theatre and explains to him that he was the victim of a practical joke which was part of the Risus Festival. The Hypatans want to honour Lucius with a statue in the forum for his unwilling participation in the prank and assure him that the god will always protect him, but Lucius declines the honour and flees the scene of his humiliation. Only very much later is Lucius told by Photis that the three wineskins were indeed 'alive' at the time of the encounter and hammering at Milo's door, because of some dark magic which involved both Photis and her mistress Pamphile, Milo's wife.

The Risus Festival, especially the scene in the theatre which I would like to concentrate on, has a certain number of *Motiventsprechungen* with later parts of the *Metamorphoses*, all portraying spectacles. Since it is the first instance of spectacle in the novel, the Risus Festival in many respects functions as a proleptic parallel for the other theatrical scenes which follow. Several recurring motifs of the novel are condensed into a single scene: it is the first instance of several in the *Metamorphoses* where the protagonist is displayed as part or the centre of a spectacle within a theatre, or watches a similar spectacle. All of these scenes are interlocked. There are several non-public displays of Lucius, for example in Book 10 to the cooks or to their master. Other more public scenes are set in the theatre, above all the scenes in the theatre of Corinth in Book 10, when Lucius is again on public display, and to a certain extent also the Isis procession in Book 11, which, as will be seen, has a remarkable number of theatrical references. In the Risus Festival (3.2–11), the portrayal of a myth in the theatre at Corinth (10.29–34), and the Isis procession in 11.7–16, the highlights of the novel are linked through several themes. In both the Risus Festival and the spectacle in the theatre of Corinth Lucius himself becomes the spectacle, whilst in Book 11 he at first watches a spectacle, that is the Isis procession, and then joins in the procession itself after his re-metamorphosis into a human being and again becomes a spectacle (*Met.* 11.16): 'exin permixtus agmini religioso procedens comitabar sacrarium totae civitati notus ac conspicuus, digitis hominum nutibusque notabilis' ('I then took my place in the sacred procession and walked along, keeping close attendance to the sacred shrine. I was recognized, indeed I was the cynosure of all eyes; the whole community singled me out with pointing fingers and nods, and gossiped about me').

Riefstahl also points out that in all three episodes gods are involved: the first 'spectacle' in the theatre is staged to honour the god Risus, the pantomime in

Book 10 portrays a divine myth, and the carnival in Book 11 is in honour of the goddess Isis. In the case of both Risus and Isis, the gods will protect Lucius for the rest of his life (cf. *Met.* 11.15), and the reference to Lucius as being the actor of this farce for the god Risus is, to a certain extent, metatheatrical, in the sense that it draws attention to the theatricality of the scene, but is found within the speech of a character in the novel:⁵

Iste deus *auctorem et actorem* suum propitius ubique comitabitur amanter nec umquam patietur ut ex animo doleas sed frontem tuam serena uenustate laetabit adsidue. (*Met.* 3.11)

(This deity will favourably accompany everywhere *the person who arouses and enacts his laughter*, and he will never allow you to grieve in mind, but will implant continual joy on your countenance with his sunny elegance.)

Furthermore, the assembly of the gods in *Cupid and Psyche* takes place in a theatre (*Met.* 6.23) and also has some theatrical references. It is widely accepted amongst scholars that there are parallels between Psyche and Lucius, and the tale of Psyche functions as a *mise en abyme* of the novel as a whole. The assembly of the gods in her story, where it is decided by the Olympians that Psyche should receive redemption and honour rather than condemnation, is parallel not only with Lucius' trial in the theatre, where he similarly unexpectedly receives honour through the Hypatans instead of condemnation to death for murder, but also with his rescue from his asinine state through Isis in Book 11.

Interpretations of the Risus Festival are varied, ranging from comparison with the belated entry of the drunken Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium* (*Smp.* 212d), to the concept of Lucius as a scapegoat⁶ to a parodic portrayal of a ritual sacrifice,⁷ or of a community integration rite,⁸ to name but a few. Walsh⁹ interprets the trial scene as a stock scene of comic and romantic novels, and Tatum¹⁰ sees the comic action on stage as a portrayal of the comedy of life. I hope to be able to establish a theatrical context for the Risus Festival as it is portrayed in Lucius' mock trial, and then will work my way backwards to find other dramatic, primarily comic, elements in this part of the story, which especially *ex eventu*, after the realization of a dramatic

⁵ *Laetare* is a deliberate archaism, cf. Callebat (1968: 295), who compares Liv. Andr. *trag.* 7 Ribbeck 'iamne oculos specie laetavisti optabili?' ('have you already delighted your eyes with this desirable sight?' (on Agamemnon's corpse)).

⁶ Cf. Habinek (1990); James (1987: 87).

⁷ Thus McCreight (1993: 46ff.).

⁸ Frangoulidis (2001), arguments repeated in Frangoulidis (2002).

⁹ Walsh (1970: 58).

¹⁰ Tatum (1979: 42).

intertext being used in the Risus Festival itself, may gain a dramatic colouring in the eyes of a second-time reader.¹¹

The Risus Festival provides an example of the multi-layered intertextuality in the *Metamorphoses*, but, I would argue, it has an overall comic tenor, with comic elements taken from a variety of sources forming a large part of its intertexts and thus a basis for its interpretation. I will give a list of comic elements in the story and some of their possible origins, and finally hope to come to a conclusion about how this scene fits into the *Metamorphoses* and prepares for the rest of the novel, especially since Lucius is transformed into a donkey shortly afterwards. As part of this question, I will also briefly look at whether Apuleius found this scene in his lost Greek original, or whether he added it to the plot and, if so, to what purpose.

The problem of the overlapping layers of intertextuality in this passage is demonstrable by Apuleius' use of epic motifs out of context: Book 2 ended with a reference to a '*Geryoneis*', the slaughter of a three-headed monster, turning Lucius in his own eyes into Hercules via a mythological paradigm, when he compares his drunken slaying of three thugs on Milo's doorstep to Hercules' killing of Geryon:¹²

meque statim utpote pugna trium latronum in uicem Geryoneae caedis fatigatum lecto simul et somno tradidi. (Met. 2.32)

(I at once retired to bed and sleep, for I was wearied with this battle against three brigands, which had been a re-enactment of the slaughter of Geryon.)

In the same vein, Book 3 begins with a mock epic reference to rosy-fingered Dawn rising in the skies:

Commodum punicantibus phaleris Aurora roseum quatiens lacertum caelum inequitabat (Met. 3.1)

(Just as Aurora with her crimson trappings brandished her rosy arm and began to drive her chariot across the sky.)

This reference to epic, however, is funny, since it is not quite appropriate to the drunken young man's actions, who is anything but a brawny demigod. A light tone is thus set, and the reader expects something mock-heroic to follow. Indeed, the story which follows is funny. In the course of the plot, the mood moves from mock-epic to comic mode. The dramatic dimension of the scene's comicality becomes more apparent in the mock trial set in the theatre. The functions of this scene for the rest of the story are problematic

¹¹ Cf. Winkler (1985: *passim* and esp. 28ff.) on the different perceptions of second- and first-time readers.

¹² On the (para)epic close of Book 2 and the beginning of Book 3 cf. Harrison (2003: 243f.).

to determine. But before we look at Apuleius' rendering of the story, we should take a brief glance at the festival's historicity.

8.3. RISUS FESTIVAL: HISTORY OR APULEIAN INVENTION?

In the stress of being put on trial for the murder of three men, Lucius puts the idea of the Risus Festival temporarily out of his mind. To him (and to the reader) it seems that the arrest has nothing to do with the worship of the god. Only *ex eventu* does it turn out that the whole setting of the mock trial is part of Hypata's worship of this god.

There is no historical evidence for this Festival of Laughter,¹³ neither anywhere else nor in Hypata, although Plutarch twice cursorily mentions a cult of Gelos (Laughter) at Sparta (*Lyc.* 25.2 and *Agis.* 30.1).¹⁴ There Gelos is recognizably an abstraction, as he is when he is mentioned in Philostratus' *Im.* 1.25.3, where he belongs to Dionysos' retinue, together with Komos:

τὸν Γέλωτά τε ἄγει καὶ τὸν Κῶμον ἱλαρωτάτῳ καὶ ξυμποτικωτάτῳ δαίμονε

(He [i.e. Dionysos] leads Laughter and Revelry, two gods most hilarious and most fond of drinking parties.)

Elsewhere, too, Gelos is occasionally part of Dionysos' entourage, linking him with the god of comedy, wine and theatre.¹⁵ There is some evidence for the inclusion of the deity of Laughter in Hermetic cosmogony, where Venus promises the personifications Pothos ('Desire'), Hedone ('Pleasure'), and Gelos as presents to Kore Kosmou ('Heavenly Maiden').¹⁶ Evidence for a cult of Gelos–Risus is thus quite scant, and nothing parallels the elaborate farce enacted in Apuleius' Hypata. There is a certain overlap with the Roman Hilaria Festival,¹⁷ which takes place at the same time of year as the Risus Festival (in Spring). Common elements include the use of Lucius as a

¹³ Cf. Van der Paardt (1971: 2f.) for a discussion of the evidence and some of the inconsistencies offered in this episode. For a bibliography on the wide-ranging interpretations of the origins and functions of this festival cf. van Mal-Maeder (2001: 398).

¹⁴ *Lyc.* 25.2: 'ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τοῦ Γέλωτος ἀγαλμάτιον ἐκεῖνον ἰδρύσασθαι Σωσίβιος ἱστορεῖ' ('Sosibius states that it was him [i.e. Lycurgus] who had erected the little statue of Laughter.') *Agis* 30. 1: 'Ἔστι δὲ Λακεδαιμονίοις οὐ Φόβου μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ Θανάτου καὶ Γέλωτος καὶ τοιούτων ἄλλων παθημάτων ἱερά.' ('The Spartans have not only temples sacred to Fear, but also to Death and Laughter and other such emotions').

¹⁵ Cf. Robertson (1919: 114).

¹⁶ Cf. Fick-Michel (1991: 412); van Mal-Maeder (2001: 399 with further bibliography).

¹⁷ Cf. Van Thiel (1971–2: i. 94f); Robertson (1919).

pharmakos, a scapegoat in a scapegoat ritual, and the trial standing in for a fighting-scene.

Despite efforts to link it with Greek festivals,¹⁸ the authenticity of the Risus Festival is debatable, and most scholars believe it to be an Apuleian invention¹⁹ to accommodate certain literary effects, and at best loosely (and possibly not at all!) based on a Greek ritual. Spectacles are a typically Roman type of entertainment,²⁰ and the assumption that the Risus Festival is a Roman addition to the plot gains force through the general acceptance that at least two other spectacular scenes are definitely Apuleian additions, namely the theatre scenes in *Cupid and Psyche* and the Isis procession in Book 11. It is accepted by most modern scholars that Apuleius added his own invented plot of a festival of an invented deity to the lost Greek original. Thus any theatrical associations in the novel are added purposefully by Apuleius, and ideally should have a function in the novel's plot.

8.4. THE GOD RISUS AND HIS SOURCES

The god Risus, then, is in all likelihood an Apuleian invention. The portrait in the *Metamorphoses* of the god himself and the ritual connected with him do not seem to be inspired by the Greek sources mentioned above. In Latin literature, there seems to be no evidence for Risus as a god, either, with one notable exception, which is likewise associated with a theatrical allusion.

Gellius 1.24 quotes three funeral epigrams on Naevius, Plautus, and Pacuvius. He himself found them in Varro, and it is possible that Apuleius (who, as we have seen, was likely to have known Gellius and was interested in Plautine language) knew them. The epigram on Plautus runs as follows:

Epigramma Plauti, quod dubitassetus, an Plauti foret, nisi a M. Varrone positum esset in libro de poetis primo:

Postquam est mortem aptus Plautus, Comoedia luget
Scaena est deserta, dein Risus, Ludus Iocusque
Et Numeri innumeri simul omnes conlacrimarunt.

(We should be inclined to doubt whether the epitaph of Plautus was really by his own hand, if it had not been quoted by Marcus Varro, in the first book of his work *On Poets*:

¹⁸ Robertson (1919); Grimal (1972).

¹⁹ Arguments for and against this being an Apuleian invention are collected in Van der Paardt (1971: 4).

²⁰ Cf. e.g. Beacham (1999).

‘Since Plautus has met his death, Comedy mourns, deserted is the Stage; then Laughter, Sport and Wit, and Music’s countless numbers [or ‘unrhythmical rhythms’? RM] all together wept.’)

In this epigram one of the gods crying for the dead Plautus is Risus. The personifications Risus, Ludus, and Iocus are all mourners, together with Plautus’ metres. The epigram lives off the conceit of Laughter crying mournfully, an oxymoron repeated in the concept of the *Numeri innumeris*;²¹ Risus is not an existing Roman deity, but a none-too serious ad hoc literary invention, not to be taken seriously as a god.

Though this epitaph is not by Plautus, it still feeds off ideas found in some of Plautus’ plays. Plautus himself was capable of constructing deities of similar characters, and some personifications of this type come close to deification.²² Ludus is personified in *Bacch.* 116, while a similar verse to this is athetized in *Pseud.* 65. In *Merc.* 846, six *sodales* (companions) are invoked by the speaker, with *iocus* (‘jest’) and *ludus* (‘sport’) among them. At *Capt.* 769f., in the context of a prayer, the speaker praises *ludum*, *iocum*, and *gaudium* (‘games, jest, and joy’). In the same play *Gaudium* (l. 862ff.) is comically deified:

ERGASILUS

Vt sacrifices.

HEGIO Cui deorum?—ERG. Mi hercle, nam ego nunc tibi sum
summus Iuppiter,
idem ego sum Salus, Fortuna, Lux, Laetitia, Gaudium.
proin tu deum hunc saturitate facias tranquillum tibi.

(ERGASILUS So that you may sacrifice.—HEGIO To which of the gods?—ERG. To me, by Hercules, for I am now to you Jupiter the highest, I am Salvation, Fortuna, Light, Gladness, Joy. Therefore make sure that you propitiate this god here by stuffing him with food!)

Ergasilus comically demands sacrifices to himself, since he replaces Jupiter and becomes personified Joy. The invention of abstract gods within the limits of the play is very Plautine (Terence does not follow his example; Menander has a certain number of abstract gods, but in different functions). In inventing a cult and a deity of Laughter, Apuleius may be following Plautus’ lead. It is clear that he does not take the cult of Risus seriously, and if he has adapted some elements of the Hilaria Festival without importing the deities of the Hilaria (Attis and Cybele)²³ he is certainly not trying to portray a historical

²¹ Cf. Courtney (1993: 49).

²² On gods in Plautus in general cf. Duckworth (1994: 295ff.); on abstract gods and the different treatment of the gods in Terence cf. p. 298.

²³ Cf. Robertson (1919: 114).

event or festival. Instead, I would argue, he points to the *literariness* of his invention. Gods of Laughter are invented for *ad hoc* purposes in comedy, and, it seems clear, in the *Metamorphoses*. In this case, Risus is an aptly improvised god.

8.5. WHY 'LAUGHTER'?

Fick-Michel²⁴ points out how much the novel is filled with ideas of smiling and laughter. From the mention of *laetitia* 'delight' ('lector, intende, laetaberis', ('Give your attention, dear reader, and it will delight you')) in its prologue (*Met.* 1.1) to its very last words, 'gaudens obibam' ('I gladly underwent'), laughter and enjoyment are at the centre of the story. Laughter is often associated with spectacle. Often Lucius is the unwilling or willing laughing-stock, the object of laughter.

During the festival of the god Risus it is not Lucius who is laughing or enjoying himself:

At ego, ut primum illam laciniam prenderam, fixus in lapidem steti gelidus nihil secus quam una de ceteris theatri statu is uel columnis. (*Met.* 3.10)

(From the moment when I seized the coverlet I myself stood rooted there, frozen into stone like one of the statues or pillars in the theatre.)

Instead, he becomes a laughing stock for others, when he becomes the *auctor* and *actor* of his own comedy of the god Risus (cf. *Met.* 3.11). He forces himself to smile after the Festival of Laughter (*Met.* 3.12), when he is congratulated by the other participants, but obviously he does not enjoy himself. He is the unwilling centre of a spectacle, the object of public laughter, from which he is excluded.

This pattern of public spectacle ending in public laughter is repeated, but with Lucius' knowledge and collusion, in Book 10, and finally in Book 11, where his enjoyment of his Isiac initiation and his new profession in Rome result in his eternal happiness and integration into the happy crowd, and where he himself does not realize that, despite his integration into the group of laughers, he is still the object of laughter, namely that of the reader.²⁵

²⁴ There is a large bibliography on laughter in the *Met.* cf. van Mal-Maeder (2001: 20f.); Schlam (1992: 40); Shumate (1996a: 82ff.); Heine (1962: 290); Fick-Michel (1991: 395–430); Smith (1994: 1589ff.); Krabbe (1989: 158ff.); Feldbrugge (1939); Zimmerman et al. (2004: 423f.).

²⁵ Some of the politics of this inversion of the gaze are discussed in Slater (2003), who also analyses the spectator–object relationships changing during the Risus Festival (p. 87ff.).

Fick-Michel, too, argues that the carnival of the *Anteludia* in Book 11 looks back on the Risus Festival, and links both of them with the tradition of ritual carnival.²⁶ In connection with Risus, the word *cachinnus* ('cackle') and its derivations (*Met.* 2.14, 2.20, 2.31 as well as 8.24 and 10.15) are prominent, a laughter which Fick-Michel defines as 'the mad laughter or noisy eruption'.²⁷ Laughter is a collective social event not only at the Risus Festival: whole groups of people break into laughter throughout the novel. Public ridicule is already anticipated in the inserted tales preceding Lucius' mock trial:²⁸ For instance, at the audience of Diophanes in *Met.* 2.14 he publicly discredits himself, and the guests of Byrrhena ridicule Thelyphron with licentious laughter (*Met.* 2.20 and 2.31). During the Festival of Risus, Lucius' mock trial, the word *risus* and its derivations take over: 'nemo qui non risu dirumperetur' ('there was not a single one who was not splitting his sides with laughter'; *Met.* 3.2),²⁹ and 'risu cachinnabili diffleebant' ('[the whole gathering . . .] was splitting its sides with loud laughter'; *Met.* 3.7), and almost everyone in the audience dissolves with laughter: 'Et certe laetitia delibuti meque respectantes cuncti theatro facessunt' ('the entire audience was overcome with hilarity, and as they quitted the theatre, they kept looking back at me'; *Met.* 3.10).

Similarly, in Book 10, the unusual spectacle of the donkey devouring human food provokes communal laughter (*Met.* 10.15 and 16), but this time Lucius endorses it.³⁰ Laughter creates a sense of community, it can include someone in or exclude them from the crowd.³¹

Thus laughter is an important element, especially of the more theatrical stories in the main narrative. Scenes set out as spectacles often end in laughter, and possible tragedy is dissolved into laughter: after the Risus Festival, Lucius is not executed for murder, and after being caught by the cooks devouring his food in Book 10, instead of being beaten, he becomes the parasite of the wealthy Thiasus and thus is allowed a better lifestyle than before. Lucius' pleasure in Isis is displayed in his happiness (*gaudebam*) in the last sentence of

²⁶ Cf. Fick-Michel (1991: 397), who also gives an overview of theories of laughter in antiquity and modern times. Cf. pp. 395–430 for an exhaustive treatment of laughter in the *Metamorphoses*.

²⁷ 'Le fou rire ou éclat bruyant', Fick-Michel (1991: 398).

²⁸ On their literary function cf. conveniently van Mal-Maeder (2001: 12ff.). Cf. also ead. (1995) and (2001: 19) on the continual changing of the content of narratives especially in Book 2 of the *Metamorphoses*.

²⁹ The phrase may be inspired by Afranius fr. 127 'ego misera risu clandestine rumpier' ('poor me, I am torn apart secretly by laughter'). Cf. Van der Paardt (1971: 32 with further bibliography). It may also be proverbial.

³⁰ Cf. May (1998).

³¹ On the social consequences of laughter cf. Bergson (1980).

the novel. Risus is prominent in the novel as a whole, but essentially in the most theatrical scenes.

Comedy is part of this spectacle, and Plautine and archaic language is found throughout the Risus Festival³² to provide a verbal link with comedy. Comic intertextuality and the image of Lucius as a laughing stock for a large audience provide Apuleius with a shortcut reference for Lucius' standing or integration into society, either by excluding him from the group of laughers or by making him the isolated unamused laughing stock of his observers.

8.6. FORUM AND THEATRE: THE SETTING OF THE TRIAL

Not only is Lucius put on trial as a public spectacle which results in comedy and laughter, but also the setting of the scene in Hypata is specifically theatrical. The unfortunate Lucius is at first supposed to be tried in the usual space for a trial, the tribunal in the forum. His trial-spectacle, however, is too popular to be crammed into the forum. The space in the forum and its elevated stage are too small, and it is demanded by the masses explicitly that the judgement be held in the theatre:

³² Plautine language is found often in the scenes, e.g. in Book 2 (Examples from De Jonge (1941: ad locc.)) *Met.* 2.18 *impendio* ('greatly') recalls Plaut. *Aul.* 18; Ter. *Eun.* 587 (cf. also on this word Callebat (1968: 518)). *Regrediare cena maturius* ('come back from your dinner reasonably early'), the comic usage without preposition, is found in Plaut. *Men.* 288 and *Merc.* 947. *Met.* 2.19 *fabre sigillatum* ('skillfully inlaid') recalls Plaut. *Men.* 132 and *Stich.* 570, while *adfatim* ('to complete satisfaction, sufficiently') is found in Plaut. *Mil.* 980, *Men.* 457 and *Cist.* 231. *Met.* 2.20 *nec usquam gentium* ('nowhere in the world', a Plautine allusion, cf. Callebat (1968: 488)) recalls Plaut. *Aul.* 413, *Poen.* 825 and *Pseud.* 98. *Met.* 2.32 *ex summis viribus* ('with all might') is a phrase similar to Plaut. *Mil.* 620 *ex opibus summis* ('with all your might'; cf. also Callebat (1968: 207)) or *Merc.* 111 *ex summis opibus viribusque* ('with all your power and strength'). *Tantillum* ('so small a quantity') is also used in Plaut. *Rud.* 1150 (cf. Callebat (1968: 520)). In Book 3, too (Cf. Van der Paardt (1971: ad locc.)), Plautine language and archaisms can be found *passim*, e.g. *Met.* 3.3 has *sedulo* ('sincerely'), which is especially frequent among the comic poets and old Latin, and *impiatum* ('stained by an act of impiety'), which occurs e.g. in Plaut. *Rud.* 192 and *Poen.* 384 and then again only in Fronto. *Met.* 3.5 has the archaism *facessat* ('to carry out'), mainly from tragedy or four times in Plautus (e.g. *Men.* 249), where it is a solemn warning. It may also have legal connotations. *Met.* 3.8 is especially paratragic, it has *evitare*, which in this meaning (*vita privare*, 'to kill') occurs only again in Enn. *scaen.* 93 Jocelyn and Accius *trag.* 348 Ribbeck and must be a deliberate archaism. For *Met.* 3.8 *pannis horridis obsita* ('in repulsive rags') cf. Ter. *Haut.* 294 (*pannis obsita*) and *Eun.* 236 (*pannis annisque* 'and with years' *obsitum*). Norden (1926) on *Aen.* 6.462 suggests a tragic model for both Terence and Virgil and suspects paratragedy. *Met.* 3.9 has *magis magisque* ('more and more'), a geminatio also found in Plaut. *Pseud.* 1214 (cf. also Callebat (1968: 527)). For *Met.* 3.11 *contumeliae causa* ('intended as an insult') cf. Ter. *Eun.* 877f. *Met.* 3.12 has *adambulabam* ('I walked along at his side'), which occurs outside Apuleius only in Plaut. *Bacch.* 768 (cf. Callebat (1968: 483)).

forum eiusque tribunal adstituor. Iamque sublimo suggestu magistratibus residenti-bus, iam praecone publico silentium clamante, repente cuncti consona uoce flagitant propter coetus multitudinem, quae pressurae nimia densitate periclitaretur, iudicium tantum theatro redderetur. (*Met.* 3.2)

(I was dragged before the tribunal in the forum. The magistrates now took their seats on the raised platform, and the city-herald loudly demanded silence. Suddenly from all present there was a concerted demand that since the huge crowd was in danger of being crushed because of the excessive numbers, this important case should be tried in the theatre.)

Similarly, the assembly of the gods in *Cupid and Psyche* (*Met.* 6.23) also takes place in the theatre. Fick-Michel (1991: 418) argues that although theatres, on Apuleius' own evidence in the *Florida*,³³ are used for performances other than those of theatrical genres, the use of the theatre as a scene for a trial is unusual. Hildebrand (1842), however, notes on *Met.* 3.2, that more significant cases which were attended by a large crowd of people were quite often moved from the forum to the theatre. In Spring 318 BC, for example, Phokion was tried in the theatre of Athens.³⁴ An example from the novels is Chariton 3.4, where a trial also takes place in a theatre. The theatre of Sabratha similarly bears evidence of having been used for events other than dramatic performances.³⁵

Theatre or Amphitheatre?

The commentators on this passage, Hildebrand and van der Paardt,³⁶ seem to think that the setting for the trial is an amphitheatre, not a theatre, Hildebrand bases his interpretation on the idea that *cavea* indicates an amphitheatre. But the *caveae conceptum* is here the 'part of the theatre in which the spectators sat'³⁷, and *cavea* can be used of both theatre and amphitheatre: Plautus, for example, calls the auditorium *cavea* (*Amph.* 66, 68) in what is undoubtedly a theatre. Apuleius gives a vivid, though exaggerated, description of its architecture (*Met.* 3.2):

aditus etiam et tectum omne fartim stipaverant, plerique columnis implexi, alii statuis dependuli, nonnulli per fenestras et lacunaria semiconspicui, miro tamen omnes studio visendi pericula salutis neclegebant. Tunc me per proscaenium medium velut quandam victimam publica ministeria producunt et orchestrae mediae sistunt.

(They even jammed the aisles and the concourse at the top. Several wound their legs round columns, others hung from statues, a few were partly visible through the

³³ Cf. Ch. 3.4 above. Cf. also Rawson (1991: 473).

³⁴ Cf. Handley (1965: 7 and on *Dysk.* 743f.).

³⁵ Cf. Ch. 2.4 above.

³⁶ Cf. ad loc. with further ref.

³⁷ Thus Van der Paardt (1971: 35).

windows and ornamental trellis-work. All were indifferent to the hazards threatening their physical safety in this curious eagerness to observe the proceedings. Then the city officials escorted me like a sacrificial victim across the stage, and made me stand in the orchestra.)

I would argue that the use of the words *orchestra* and especially *proscenium* points clearly towards a theatre rather than an amphitheatre:³⁸ *proscenium* is used of the stage in *Truc.* 10, *Amph.* 91, *Poen.* 17 and 57, and also occurs in Apuleius' description of the theatre in Carthage, which has similar equipment and uses similar words to describe it, cf. *Flor.* 18.3:

praeterea in auditorio hoc genus spectari debet non pavimenti marmoratio nec proscenii contabulatio nec scaenae columnatio, sed nec culminum eminentia nec lacunarium refulgentia nec sedilium circumferentia.

(Moreover, in an auditorium of this kind, what ought to be looked at is not the marbling of the paving, nor the flooring of the proscenium, nor the pillaring of the stage, nor the eminence of the roof, nor the brilliance of the paneled ceiling, nor the expanse of the seating.)

The description of windows and especially *lacunaria* (panel ceilings) makes much more sense if one of the elaborate theatres of the imperial age is supposed to be envisaged,³⁹ a theatre which would feature such architectural elements as well as the statues and columns mentioned here and again in *Met.* 3.10.

All these architectural elements are more naturally associated with a theatre, and are out of place in an amphitheatre. The setting is thus theatrical, and this is the first scene in the *Metamorphoses* in which Lucius is explicitly put on display in a theatre. The trial becomes more dramatic and entertaining, and it is set in a fitting, dramatized context. The corresponding scene towards the end of the *Metamorphoses* occurs in Book 10, which again is set in a theatre, with some obvious dramatic performances (including a pantomime, cf. *Met.* 10.30ff.).

At the Risus Festival the usual instruments of justice are parodied, the magistrates lead Lucius through the streets of Hypata like a criminal on his way to court, and a courtroom speech with Ciceronian flavour and the proper accoutrements of courtroom speeches is delivered in the theatre.

As soon as the procession is redirected from the forum to the theatre, from a world of sacrificial victims to that of bizarre farces, the setting as well as the content of the scene becomes more theatrical, too. Given that trial scenes are

³⁸ Cf. Bieber (1961: 167); Callebat (1968: 65).

³⁹ Cf. Bieber (1961: 190ff.) for imperial theatre buildings. Slater (2003: 89) takes the interpretation of the location as theatre for granted.

part of the stock-in-trade of both comedies and tragedies, both kinds of outcome are possible for Lucius' trial. The charge is serious, triple murder, and thus the readers' expectations, like Lucius' fears, may tend more towards a potentially tragic result.

8.7. THE CRIME: KILLING THE WINESKINS

Thus the trial itself becomes theatrical, a spectacle, an opportunity for performance in the presence of the god of Laughter. This connotation, I would like to argue, can be extended to the crime itself. The slaughtering of the wineskins has been interpreted in various ways, including a hint at mystery initiations,⁴⁰ or as proverbial, but the evidence cited is not convincing.⁴¹ Milanezzi⁴² justly casts doubt on the closeness of this assumed proverb to Apuleius' narrative. In retrospect, Lucius' killing of the wineskins and the trial it results in are comic, but, as we shall see, with a tragic subtext.

This episode of the slaughter of the wineskins is not only funny in itself, as the story's treatment in *Don Quixote* (1.35) corroborates, but is also not devoid of theatrical connotations. Since Risus and his festival, as well as the cause for the mock trial, the killing of the wineskins, seem to be Apuleian inventions, I would like to draw a parallel to the other instance in ancient literature where a wineskin is slaughtered, and that, too, during a religious festival, namely Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousai* (produced 411 BC), a parallel which has also been noticed by Milanezzi (1992). The parallels she lists between Apuleius and Aristophanes are the fact that the mothers in both cases want revenge, and also that Lucius and Euripides' relative Mnesilochos⁴³ sacrifice the wineskins in order to save their own lives.⁴⁴ She is, however, more interested in discussing the identity of Risus and the god's links with religious rituals involving laughter.

In Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousai*, Euripides is worried that the women during the Thesmophoria Festival will decide to punish him for his well-known misogyny. He persuades one of his relatives, Mnesilochos, to dress

⁴⁰ Bartalucci (1988).

⁴¹ e.g. Grimal (1972: 457); Ciaffi (1960: 106), who both list Petron. *Sat.* 42.4 ('utres inflati ambulamus', 'we walk along like blown-up wineskins') and Epich. Fr. 246 Kaibel (1899) as evidence for this.

⁴² Cf. Milanezzi (1992: 141f.).

⁴³ Although the name never occurs in the text, it is commonly supplied for the character, cf. Sommerstein (1994: 157) for the problem.

⁴⁴ Cf. Milanezzi (1992: 146).

up as a woman and act as his advocate to the all-female assembly. Unfortunately, Mnesilochos is discovered and himself threatened. He defends himself by snatching the woman Mica's baby in swaddling clothes, and takes refuge at an altar (689ff.). He threatens to kill the baby (which later turns out to be a wineskin) with a sword, in a parody of Euripides' *Telephos*.⁴⁵ In this tragedy, Telephos, the king of Mysia, disguises himself as a beggar in order to go to Agamemnon's Argos before the start of the Trojan War. When his disguise is disclosed by Odysseus, he manages to snatch the baby Orestes from the nurse and takes refuge at the altar. Agamemnon and later Achilles agree to help Telephos and to ask him to guide the expedition to Troy; Orestes is spared.

For the *Thesmophoriazousae* the scene of killing the wineskin as a substitute for the baby Orestes is most important. It is the first of a series of scenes in which well-known episodes from Euripidean rescue plays are parodied: *Andromeda* and *Palamedes* as well as *Helen* are included in the list of plays parodied. The wineskin/baby of the *Thesmophoriazousae* sets the scene for this repetitive sequence of rescue scenes in the comedy, all of which follow a similar pattern, until Mnesilochos is finally freed from his captors. The parody of Euripides' *Telephos* is full of tragic language.⁴⁶

In Aristophanes' earlier play *Acharnians* (produced 425 bc), the same scene of *Telephos* is already parodied, as Dikaiopolis snatches a basket of coals.⁴⁷ The plot of *Telephos* seems to be widely recognizable and thus prone to parody. The scene from *Thesmophoriazousae* was apparently well known in its own right: a Tarentine red-figure bell-krater from Würzburg (H 5697),⁴⁸ dating from c.380–370 bc, indicates its popularity even outside Athens.

It has been argued that in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae*, the sacrifice of the wineskin-baby parodies that at the Thesmophoria Festival,⁴⁹ but important here are the obvious elements that parody tragedy: a serious tragic situation (the threat to Telephos' life) is parodied in a potentially threatening situation (the threat to Mnesilochos' life and limbs by the frenzied women). Despite the slaughtering, however, of the wineskins (in the case of both

⁴⁵ Cf. Heath (1987) for a reconstruction of the play which is followed here.

⁴⁶ Cf. Rau (1967: 48ff.); on paratragedy cf. also now Silk (2000: 25f.).

⁴⁷ Cf. *Ach.* 303–593, with Heath (1987) and Sommerstein (1994: 6 with n. 36).

⁴⁸ On the passage in general cf. Sommerstein (1994), esp. p. 12 with n. 73 for further bibliography on the Würzburg vase and p. 198; and Prato (2001: 270ff.) (with further references on Euripidean tragedy). For a picture and discussion cf. Green (1994: 64f.); Sommerstein (1994: 12); Taplin (1993: 36ff.). Mitchell (2000), discussing the parodic use of the wineskin imagery in vase paintings, with satyrs acting out the ripping of wineskins as a parody of the Dionysiac *sparagmos*, also analyses Apuleius' passage in these terms. On paratragedy in Aristophanes in general cf. Rau (1967), esp. p. 217 on the frequency of *Telephos* parodies in Aristophanes, and pp. 42–50 for a discussion of the *Telephos* passages in *Thesmophoriazousai*, as well as Silk (2000: 39f., 48f.).

⁴⁹ Cf. Sommerstein's (1994) 'Introduction'.

Mnesilochos and Lucius), the ultimate danger is averted. No ritual slaughter of a human has taken place, but an acceptable, even comic, substitution through a good vintage. By the time Mnesilochos ‘kills’ the baby, he already has realized that he is not slaughtering a real baby (l. 733), but a woman’s wine ration smuggled into the party. But he and Mica the ‘mother’ continue to pretend it is a real baby that has been slaughtered. Lucius, on the other hand, does not realize whilst committing the ‘crime’ that he is not in fact killing humans. His justification at the time is permissible self-defence.

The comic idea of slaughtering wineskins during a religious festival may have been picked up by Apuleius in the Risus Festival. In both cases, a woman’s child gets ‘slaughtered’, and in both cases the dead person turns out to be a wineskin, and in both cases the blood (or rather wine) is spilt by ‘killing’ or ‘sacrificing’ the wineskin, with the ‘mother’ of the wineskin clamouring rhetorically for revenge for the murder (*Met.* 3.8):

Per publicam misericordiam per commune ius humanitatis’ aiunt ‘miseremini indigne caesorum iuuenum nostraeque uiduitati ac solitudini de uindicta solacium date. Certe paruuli huius in primis annis destituti fortunis succurrite et de latronis huius sanguine legibus uestris et disciplinae publicae litate.

(We entreat you by the sense of compassion which you share, and in the name of the universal rights of mankind. Show pity for these young men undeservedly slain. By taking vengeance afford some consolation to the one of us now widowed, and to the other left forlorn, or at any rate lend support to the fortunes of this little child orphaned in his infancy, and do justice to your laws and to public order with the blood of this ruffian.)

Indeed, at the first entrance of the younger woman, Apuleius again draws attention to the fact that the whole scene takes place in a theatre, in which the women (and Lucius) act as if they were taking part in a play:

quaedam mulier per medium theatrum lacrimosa et flebilis atra veste contexta parvulum quendam sinu tolerans decurrit. (*Met.* 3.8)

(a woman, sobbing and tear-stained, wearing mourning black and carrying a baby in her lap, came running down through the theatre)

The older woman’s appearance, too, is described in tragic language: ‘pannis horridis obsita’ (‘in repulsive rags’; *Met.* 3.8), which then, once the happy solution is discovered, is *ex eventu* recognizable as paratragic.⁵⁰ There is even an Aristotelian *peripeteia*,⁵¹ in this case a move from unhappiness to happiness, in *Met.* 3.9: ‘subito in contrariam faciem obstupefactus haesi’ (‘now I was stopped in my tracks and dumbfounded at this transformation’). A potentially tragic

⁵⁰ Cf. n. 32 above on *Met.* 3.8.

⁵¹ Cf. Arist. *Po.* 1452a21ff.

outcome—the execution of Mnesilochos before he decides to kill the wineskin-baby, or the condemnation of Lucius—is avoided, and the spectacular solution to both cases is similar: ‘killing’ a wineskin is a harmless undertaking not uncommon at a festival, and apt especially for the Risus Festival, for a god who represents comedy and may be associated with Dionysos.⁵²

8.8. APULEIUS AND ARISTOPHANES

During the Second Sophistic, Aristophanes was not nearly as highly regarded as Menander, as Pseudo-Plutarch’s attack on Aristophanes in the *Comparison of Aristophanes and Menander* (*Moralia* 853a–854d) exemplifies. Menander is more widely known throughout the theatres and lecture rooms. New Comedy fits in better with the self-definition of the Greeks in the Second Sophistic. ‘Plutarch’ regards both Aristophanic comedy and mime as unworthy literary genres and prefers Menander.⁵³ Aristophanes is similarly neglected in the Latin authors of the Second Sophistic. Apuleius never mentions Aristophanes by name, but Gellius quotes several times from *Frogs*, *Thesmophoriazousai*, and other plays and proves a certain interest in Aristophanes in the Second Sophistic.⁵⁴

The evidence for Apuleius’ knowledge of Aristophanes is quite scanty. Keulen (2003b), arguing for Apuleius’ use of *Clouds*, is perhaps rather too optimistic.⁵⁵ He lists primarily Greek evidence for the knowledge of Socrates’ portrait in the *Clouds* during the second century AD:⁵⁶ Lucian *Pisc.* 25, and Plutarch *Moralia* 10 c–d, which shows awareness of Socrates’ derision through

⁵² For a possible Dionysiac connection of the wineskin imagery cf. Mitchell (2000).

⁵³ Cf. Hunter (2000), esp. p. 270: ‘In discussing elsewhere the type of entertainment suitable for symposia, Plutarch juxtaposes the “low buffoonery” (βαμολογία) of Old Comedy and contemporary mime or farce so as to make clear that there is in fact no moral or ethical difference between Aristophanes and such uneducated performances (*Mor.* 712a, 712e) [...] Needless to say, Menander is praised for precisely the opposite style and the ethically beneficial power of his poetry (*Moralia* 712b–c).’

⁵⁴ Gellius quotes from *Th.* 453ff. in 15.20, from *Olkades* in 19.13, and from *Ra.* in *praef.* 20f., 1.15, 12.5 and 13.25. Holford-Strevens (2003: 236) is careful about Gellius’ reading of Aristophanes: some of the Aristophanic quotations may derive from secondary sources; and the only play Gellius has demonstrably read is *Frogs* (p. 125). Fronto shows no interest in Attic comedy, though Favorinus cites Menander once, and Marcus Aurelius has two quotations from Aristophanes and one from Menander: *Meditations* 4.23.5, 7.66.2 Aristophanes, 5.12.4 Menander; cf. Holford-Strevens (2003: 236f.).

⁵⁵ Keulen (2003b: 113) treats *Met.* 1.17.1 ‘ubi es tu, qui ... stertis involutus?’ (‘Where have you got to? ... now you are snoring in your blankets!’) as an ‘almost literal translation’ of *Clouds* 11 ‘ἀλλ’ εἰ δοκεῖ, βέγκωμεν ἐγκεκαλυμμένοι’ (‘Come on, if you want to, let’s wrap ourselves up and snore!’).

⁵⁶ Keulen (2003b: 111 with n. 7).

Aristophanes rather than knowledge of the comedy itself. Knowledge of Aristophanes is not as widely spread in the Second Sophistic as is the knowledge of the comedy of Menander and Philemon. Still, there is some evidence that Apuleius will have known especially purple passages of certain plays, and identification of Socrates of the *Clouds* with the Socrates of the *Metamorphoses* requires only anecdotal knowledge, as available for example through *compendia*, rather than close reading of the text itself.

There are a few proverbs in the *Metamorphoses* that are also found in Aristophanes. In *Met.* 8.27 Lucius-ass carries the image of the *dea Syria* on his back, which might recall Ar. *Ra.* 159 ‘ἐγὼ γοῦν ὄνος ἄγω μυστήρια’ (‘I the donkey am acting in the mysteries’), but this saying is perhaps also proverbial.⁵⁷ A further proverb is found in *Met.* 9.42, ‘de prospectu et umbra asinia natum est frequens proverbium’ (‘this is the origin of the much-quoted proverb about the peeping ass and its shadow’), which is also found in Ar. *V.* 191 (‘περὶ ὄνου σκιᾶς’, ‘about the shadow of an ass’), but also Pl. *Phdr.* 260c. *Suda* O 400 cites other dramatic sources (Sophocles’ *Kedalion*, Aristophanes’ *Daedalus*), whilst Zenobios says it was also used in Menander’s *Encheiridion*,⁵⁸ and thus Apuleius did not necessarily derive it from Aristophanes.

The clearest reference to Aristophanes is found in *Cupid and Psyche*, where in Psyche’s fourth task she is to fetch a box filled with Persephone’s beauty from the Underworld. In order to accomplish this task, as so often in her story, she wants to commit suicide, and throw herself off a tower in order to reach Hades (*Met.* 6.17).⁵⁹ This tower, however, tells her how to get into Hades without turning to such a harsh measure. This appears to be a nod to *Ra.* 127ff., where Herakles tells Dionysos to throw himself off a tower in order to get to Hades.

HERAKLES Βούλει ταχέϊαν καὶ κατάντη σοι φράσω;
 DIONYSOS Νῆ τὸν Δί', ὥς ὄντος γε μὴ βαδιστικοῦ.
 HER Καθέρπυσόν νυν εἰς Κεραμεικόν.
 DIO Κᾶτα τί;
 HER Ἀναβάς ἐπὶ τὸν πύργον τὸν ὑψηλόν-
 DIO Τί δρῶ;
 HER ἀφιμένην τὴν λαμπάδ' ἐντεῦθεν θεῶ,
 κᾶπειτ' ἐπειδὴν φώσω οἱ θεώμενοι
 'εἶνται', τόθ' εἶναι καὶ σὺ σαυτόν.
 DIO Ποῶ;
 HER Κάτω.

⁵⁷ Cf. Hijmans et al. (1985: 239), with further literature and references to other genres.

⁵⁸ Cf. Hijmans et al. (1995: 354).

⁵⁹ ‘Nec cunctata diutius pergit ad quampiam turrim praealtam, indidem sese datura praecipitem.’ (‘She lingered no longer, but made for a very high tower, intending to throw herself headlong from it.’)

(HERAKLES Do you want me to recommend you a swift and steep descent?—DIONYSOS Yes, by Zeus, for I am not a good walker.—HER. Go down to the Kerameikos.—DIO. And then?—HER. Climb onto the top of the tall tower...—DIO. And what do I do then?—HER. Watch out for the start of the torch-race, and when the whole audience shouts 'They are off!'; then let yourself off, too.—DIO. Where?—HER. Down to the ground!)

Although there may be other sources for the tower as a source of suicide,⁶⁰ the verbal parallels with Aristophanes' version are quite convincing.⁶¹ This indicates the use of Aristophanes in at least one other part of the *Metamorphoses*, but it is reversed in its tone: instead of being a suggested (and then discarded) means to suicide and thus access to the Underworld, the tower, which seems to be conscious of its intertextual prehistory, advises Psyche on a better way to reach Hades than the one suggested in Aristophanes.

Leading up to the Risus Festival there may be another allusion to Aristophanes, namely the name of Lucius' aunt and hostess, which Apuleius changes from Habroia in the Greek original to the rare name Byrrhena.⁶² In Aristophanes *Eq.* 449 the Sausage Seller taunts the Paphlagonian with a pun on a woman's name: 'Τὼν Βυρσίνης τῆς Ἰππίου' ('of Hippias' Byrsine'). The wife of Hippias the tyrant was not called Byrsine, but Myrsine, and the pun is deliberate and apt for a leather-seller like the Paphlagonian. Myrsine or

⁶⁰ Cf. Fraenkel (1932=1964), whose only other example for a tower being used is taken from Hor. *Epod.* 17.70ff. Neither Mankin's (1995) nor Watson's (2003) commentary on *Epodes* lists any further evidence for towers, leaving Aristophanes, Horace, and Apuleius as the only authors who include jumping off a tower in the methods of suicide.

⁶¹ Cf. Walsh (1970: 215 with n. 4). Kenney (1990a: 212f.) lists verbal parallels between Apuleius and Aristophanes; cf. now also Zimmerman et al. (2004: 493ff.), with further references and evidence for Plautine language in the scene, especially in the speech of the tower itself in *Met.* 6.17 (cf. e.g. on *quidem profecto, nullo pacto, or auscultata*).

⁶² Van Mal-Maeder (2001: 86f.) gives diverse explanations for this name. She also mentions the theory that 'Byrrhena' is linked to 'Myrrhina', for which cf. Milanezzi (1992: 146); Hijmans (1978b), 110. As evidence for Apuleius' knowledge of Aristophanes, Milanezzi lists the name Byrrhena as possibly deriving from Myrrhina, a character in *Lysistrata*, and the door-knocking of Lucius at Milo's door in *Met.* 1.22 as a parallel to Dionysos and Herakles in *Ra.* 38f. I argue elsewhere (cf. Ch. 7 above) that door-knocking, which also appears in Greek New and Roman Comedy, was a common comic motif also elsewhere employed by Apuleius. The change of name is however more problematic: if we were to accept the parallel to *Lysistrata*, this would require changing the name of the character in Apuleius to Myrrhina, involving an emendation in the text. I would be reluctant to do this in order to establish a connection to Aristophanes, also because Myrrhina is a comic name in Menander, namely as that of a married citizen woman in *Perikeiromene*, *Dyskolos*, *Heros*, *Georgos* (cf. Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 466), Plautus, in the *Casina*, and Terence (*Hecyra*). The name Byrrhena is more apt, given her claim that she had had a hand in Lucius' education: *Met.* 2.3: 'ego te, o Luci, meis istis manibus educavi' ('Lucius, these hands of mine reared you'), indicating ironically that a leather whip might have taken a role in his education as a young boy.

Myrrhine is a common name at Athens, but Byrsine is unique. Fick-Michel (1991: 290f.) discusses the name Byrrhena as a derivation of *βυρσίνη*, and argues that *Met.* 2.21

Ac sic aggeratis in cumulum stragulis et effultus in cubitum suberectusque [in torum] porrigit dexteram et ad instar oratorum conformat articulum duobusque infimis concludis digitis ceteros eminens [porrigens] et infesto pollice clementer subrigens

(So then Thelyphron piled up the couch-coverlets, and raised himself partly upwards on the couch by leaning on them with his elbow. He then stretched out his right hand, deploying an arm as orators do, with the two smaller fingers bent and the others extended, and with the thumb gently but accusingly pointed upward.)

is an inversion of *Eq.* 58–60:

Ἡμᾶς δ' ἀπελαύνει κοῦκ ἔῃ τὸν δεσπότην
 ἄλλον θεραπεύειν, ἀλλὰ βυρσίνην ἔχων
 δειπνοῦντος ἐστὼς ἀποσοβεῖ τοὺς ῥήτορας.

(But he [i.e. the Paphlagonian] drives us away, and doesn't allow anyone else to serve the master, but when he sits down for dinner he stands by with a leather whip (*βυρσίνη*) and beats away the orators.)

She argues that Apuleius represents an inversion of the behaviour of the characters in *Knights* (produced 424 BC): instead of beating away orators with a leather whip when she sits down to dinner, a woman whose name translates as 'Lady Leather Whip' invites her guest to speak assuming an orator's stance.⁶³

Again, as in the passage from *Frogs*, Apuleius seems (if we accept this allusion) to turn an Aristophanic story upside down, by letting Byrrhena react in the opposite manner. These findings seem to suggest that Apuleius not only has (and supposes his readership to have) a good knowledge of Aristophanes, or at least of some Aristophanic purple passages, but that he rewrites Aristophanic comedy when it suits him and for comic purposes.

The Risus Festival trial, set in a theatre, may have been preceded by a comic 'crime' with tragic intertext, the slaughtering of wineskins. Both these Apuleian additions to the text thus seem to be linked to comedy with a tragic potential and to the theatre, turning his hero Lucius into a spectacle for a large crowd of theatre-goers.

⁶³ Fick-Michel (1991: 86) also argues that another passage, 'solis . . . testatus oculis' ('I called to witness the eyes of the Sun and of Justice') may recall V. 975, but the passages are not similar enough to establish the case.

8.9. YOUNG DRUNKARDS

Even the introduction to the scene may have some comic connotations, especially to a second-time reader. At the very beginning of the Risus Festival sequence in *Met.* 2.18, Photis warns Lucius of young men drinking and molesting passers-by in the street:

‘Heus tu,’ inquit ‘cave regrediare cena maturius. Nam vesana factio nobilissimorum iuvenum pacem publicam infestat; passim trucidatos per medias plateas videbis iacere, nec praesidis auxilia longinqua levare civitatem tanta clade possunt.

(Be sure to come back from your dinner reasonably early, because there is a lunatic band of upper-class youths disturbing the peace of the streets. You will see the corpses of murdered people lying in various places on the public highways. The provincial governor’s forces cannot rid the city of all this killing, because they are so far away.)

There are some historical occasions, where komastic revelry became dangerous,⁶⁴ but groups of drunken young men often occur in Greek New comedies, where they form the chorus.⁶⁵

Hildebrand (1842: ad loc.) refers to Plaut. *Amph.* 153f. to indicate a similar threat to life and limb for nocturnal wanderers.

SOSIA Qui me alter est audacior homo aut qui confidentior,
iuventutis mores qui sciam, qui hoc noctis solus ambulem?

(SOSIA Which other man is more daring, who is more confident than me who know the habits of the youth, and who walk about alone here at night?)

Sosia fears a group of young men who might harm him at night.⁶⁶ Photis’ advice to Lucius to return in good time for dinner, is also phrased in comic language and plainly reminds us of what might happen if the protagonists of a comedy do not evacuate the stage in time for the chorus to enter: drunken young men might cause havoc amongst them.

Bacch. 106 Lindsay = 107 ‘simul huic <nos> nescio quoi turbae quae huc it decedamus <hinc>’ (‘at the same time, let us get away from here from this strange crowd which is coming here’) may be a translation from Menander, indicating remnants of a chorus in an otherwise chorus-less Plautine play.⁶⁷ In *Stich.* 604ff., Gelasimus exhorts Pamphilus not to go out to eat, and warns

⁶⁴ Cf. van Mal-Maeder (2001: ad loc.), Arnott (1996: 301f.) and Tylawsky (2002: 85ff.) for examples. De Jonge (1941: ad loc.) gives some references to drunken behaviour of youths in Rome.

⁶⁵ Cf. Arnott (1996: 298 and 300).

⁶⁶ Juvenal, too, gives a picture of nocturnal groups of drunken men and the dangers they cause, cf. e.g. *Iuv.* 3.268–314. cf. also Horsfall (2003: 77) on the social reality of drunken revelry.

⁶⁷ Cf. Duckworth (1994: 99f.); Barsby (1986: 104).

him (also in his own self-interest!) about the dangers out on the road. He, too, wants his master to return home before dinner:

GELASIMUS cave sis tu tibi,

Non tu scis quam—ecflictentur homines noctu hic in via?

(GELASIMUS Be careful [. . .] Don't you know how men are set upon at night here in this street?)

No apparent chorus follows in this play. This type of chorus introduction was doubtless developed into a stereotype during Middle Comedy; it is thus a well-known and flexible Greek dramatic convention, ranging from Middle to New Comedy and which made its way into Latin plays.

In Menander this kind of stereotype is primarily used to indicate the approach of the chorus at the end of the first act. This is found in Menander *Asp.* 246ff., *Dysk.* 230f., *Epit.* 169f., *Pk.* 261f, Antiphanes fr. 91 K.–A., and Alexis 112 Arnott (*Kouris*). Arnott (1996: 300) has developed a typology of this formula: at first, the approach of a group of men is signalled. This approach then gives the reason for the speaker and others on stage to leave it, often introduced with *καὶ γάρ* or *ὥς καί* ('because'). The approaching men are often revellers, often drunk, and it would be advisable to escape from their path.

At the end of the first act of *Aspis* (245ff.), for example, the slave Daos wants everyone to move away from the door, because the chorus, which is envisaged as a group of drunken men, is coming close to them:

DAOS ἐκποδῶν
ἀπαλλάγηθ' ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας· καὶ γάρ τινα
ὄχλον ἄλλον ἀνθρώπων προσιόντα τουτονὶ
ὁρῶ μεθυσόντων.

(DAOS Off with you!
Away from our door! There's another rabble
approaching here, I see—some men, quite drunk. (trans. Arnott))

Epitrepontes (169ff.) has a similar phrasing, and here it is clear that the group of revelers consists of young men:

CHAIRESTRATOS ἴωμ]εν ὥς καὶ μείρακυλλίων ὄχλος
εἰς τ]ὸν τόπον τις ἔρχεθ' ὑποβεβρεγμένων
οἷς] μὴ ᾽νοχλεῖν εὐκαιρον εἶν[α]ί μο[ι] δοκεῖ.

(CHAIRESTRATOS [Let]'s, for there's a bunch of teen-age drunks
just coming, this direction. I don't [think]
this is the time for getting in [their] way. (trans. Arnott))

The pattern is variable: for example in *Dysk.* 230ff. the chorus consists of a group of Pan-worshippers; but generally the idea of drunk young men coming close to a house and forming some sort of threat or nuisance to the characters outside the door is a traditional element of comedy.

Photis' advice shows some of the same characteristics: the reason for carefulness is given. Instead of drunken revellers, Lucius' group of young men are just 'crazy' ('vesana factio nobilissimorum iuvenum' ('a lunatic band of upper-class youths')), but it is still advisable to avoid them, because those that do not will be seen to lie butchered in the streets ('trucidatos per medias plateas...iacere' ('corpses of murdered people lying...on the public highways')). Photis' speech thus contains in variation the elements of this set piece, but, like in *Stichus*, without the chorus approaching, and may thus form a metatheatrical reference to comedy.

There are however significant differences between the incident in the *Metamorphoses* and a Greek comedy plot: in the *Metamorphoses*, the group of young men does not actually arrive (and it might even be fictitious—Photis' invention to lure Lucius back to her earlier), and when the wineskins instead appear, it is they who suffer grievous harm from a drunken Lucius. Ironically, they are indeed full of wine, as it turns out later, but not really drunk. Thus the tables are turned in Apuleius' version yet again, since he rewrites the situation into a surprising end, just as before when he used Aristophanes: the chorus of wineskins suffers harm from the protagonist, who, instead of carefully moving away from the door, is himself drunk enough to inflict mortal wounds on a group of what he thinks of as young thugs.

Within the reality of the plays of Middle and New Comedy, the characters expect real danger to arise from these groups of drunken young men, and disappear off stage into the house. Similarly Lucius, when encountering the wineskins on Milo's doorstep, assumes that Milo and his household would be seriously harmed, and wants to take refuge in Milo's house, but is prevented from entering it safely and peacefully by the animated wineskins.

For Apuleius' readership used to this hackneyed introduction of a chorus, this indicates a metatheatrical reference. In Apuleius there seems to be a real threat to Lucius at first, too, and only to the second-time reader does the threat appear as harmless. For a second-time reader this comic reference will have a further metatheatrical effect, too, directing the reader's attention to the comic subtexts of Lucius' trial.

8.10. ACTOR AND AUCTOR

An important reference, finally, occurs at the end of the Risus Festival episode:

iste deus [sc. Risus] auctorem et actorem suum propitius ubique comitabitur amantem. (Met. 3.11)

(‘This deity [sc. Risus] will favourably accompany everywhere the person who arouses and enacts his laughter.’)

Lucius is addressed after his trial as the author and actor (‘the person who arouses and enacts’) of Risus. Although the word *actor* is not necessarily associated with the stage,⁶⁸ the comic context of the Risus Festival invites us to read this final reference metafictionally, as it were, as referring to Lucius as the *actor* of his own *fabula*, rounding off the allusions to drama in this episode. If we read it as a metafictional reference, it is clear that the god Risus will follow Lucius through the rest of his story as told by Apuleius. Lucius will be the victim of laughter for the rest of the novel. This is not unparalleled with other passages in the *Metamorphoses*; Met. 2.12 seems to indicate that Lucius will become the hero of his own novel,⁶⁹ since the Chaldean Diophanes prophesies to him:

Nunc enim gloriam satis floridam, nunc historiam magnam et incredundam fabulam et libros me futurum.

(‘[He said that] at one time my fame would blossom considerably, and at another I would be the subject of a lengthy story, an unbelievable tale spread over several books.’)

8.11. CONCLUSION

The festival’s theatricality is briefly discussed by Finkelpearl (1998).⁷⁰ She sees the function of the theatrical setting as a pointer to the ‘theatricality of the proceedings’, evoking ‘another level of falsehood’, and argues that the trial is as

⁶⁸ *Actor* has nowhere else in the *Metamorphoses* a theatrical meaning: Met. 2.26.9 ‘actor’ means steward; *Socr.* 155 has no theatrical meaning. The other two places in literature where this juncture occurs, are: Cic. *Sest.* 28.61 ‘dux, auctor, actor illarum rerum’ (‘the leader, author and actor of those things’) and Nepos *Atticus* 3.2; both quotations occur in non-dramatic contexts. On the word cf. also Callebat (1968: 35).

⁶⁹ Cf. Smith (1972: 532f.), Harrison (2000: 232).

⁷⁰ Finkelpearl (1998: 88).

false as that of the dog in Aristophanes' *Wasps*. The laughter of Lucius' audience seems to be inappropriate to the first-time reader, since he appears to be on trial for murder. Only the second-time reader, who knows that the trial will dissolve into nothing, can enjoy the trial portrayed as it is. Lucius' Hypatan audience knows more than both the *actor* Lucius and the reader at the time. This is, to a certain extent, dramatic irony, but although it includes the internal audience, it excludes the external audience, the first-time reader.

At first it seems that the Festival of Laughter, despite its setting in a theatre, has few allusions to what is commonly performed in such a setting: tragedy or comedy. Only at a second glance, and only after the resolution of the murder case as the drunken slaughtering of three wineskins, do some comic motifs appear.

It seems certain that the god himself, Risus, because of certain Dionysiac and Plautine connotations, is not to be taken seriously, and the festival is not a description of a 'real' religious festival celebrated in Hypata or Rome. Instead, I would argue, it is a nod towards the presiding god of comedy, a none-too-serious invention possibly based on Plautus' none-too-serious deifications of the gods of laughter. Lucius will remain under his dubious 'protection' throughout the whole novel, being a comic figure and prone to being laughed at publicly.

In a similar vein, Apuleius constructs his episode of the killing of the wineskins after a well-known Greek comedy, Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousai*, and even the introduction to the sequence, Photis' warning about the dangerous young men, may be based on references to the appearance of the chorus in comedies.⁷¹

These single elements, at first, do not amount to much, but for a second-time reader, familiar with tragic and comic-parodic conventions, there emerges a picture of possible death in Lucius' mind, undermined by

⁷¹ Photis also compares Lucius, who has killed wineskins rather than live bandits, to the hapless Ajax, who slew cattle instead of the intended Greek army (*Met.* 3.18):

cum ecce crapula madens et improvidae noctis deceptus caligine audacter mucrone destricto in insani modum Aiace armatus, non ut ille vivis pecoribus infestus tota laniavit armenta, sed longe <tu> fortius qui tres inflatos caprinos utres exanimasti, ut ego te prostratis hostibus sine macula sanguinis non homicidam nunc sed utricidam amplecterer.

(At that moment you appeared on the scene, drunk with wine and deceived by the darkness of the sightless night. You drew your short sword, and armed yourself for the role of the mad Ajax. But whereas he inflicted violence on living cattle and lacerated whole herds, you much more courageously dealt the death-blow to three inflated goatskins. Thus you laid low the enemy without shedding a drop of blood, so that I can embrace not a homicide but an utricide.)

The charmingly mocking comparison utilizes tragedy in order to deride Lucius' error in a comic manner.

comic conventions (like Mnesilochos' fate based on the *Telephos* action in *Thesmophoriazousai*), which forms itself into a consistent picture of a comic intertext throughout the whole sequence of the Risus Festival. The functions of these comic references are manifold. They prepare for a pattern of theatrical references throughout the novel, from the turning of Lucius into a willing or unwilling spectacle, even or especially at religious festivals, to the repeated exposure of Lucius to a laughing crowd. Furthermore, comedy and the possibility of sudden comic reversals of a potentially tragic plot (from *Telephos* to Mnesilochos' version of his story) can be expected for other theatrical or spectacular episodes in Lucius' adventures. Comedy as a genre uniquely manages to provide these diverse functions: reversal of Fortune and a happy ending are essential comic plot elements.

Motiventsprechungen between this introductory comic sequence and other theatrical references later in the novel create a pattern of Apuleian use of comedy throughout the *Metamorphoses*. Important themes of the novel as a whole are brought up for the first time in the Risus episode. Themes like the spectacular display of Lucius, during which he becomes an object of laughter, and the involvement of gods in a theatrical or pseudo-religious context, recur repeatedly at crucial points in the novel,⁷² culminating in the public display of Lucius just before (Book 10) and after (Book 11) his re-metamorphosis. Similarly, the employment of comedy and drama as a subtext to Lucius' story is a recurrent theme throughout the *Metamorphoses*, arguably to its very end, when Lucius is rescued by Isis in another rare reversal of fortune.

⁷² For a similar *Motiventsprechung*, the situation of Lucius and Psyche as *spectaculum*-like centres of attention (Lucius at the Risus Festival, in *Met.* 10.29, and in *Met.* 11; Psyche as a spectacle for the people who worship her as a goddess in *Met.* 4.28, but an observer herself of the spectacle of Cupid's palace and Cupid asleep) cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 42).

Cupid and Psyche: A Divine Comedy

9.1. INTRODUCTION

The intricate literary texture of the inset tale of *Cupid and Psyche* (*Met.* 2.28–6.26) has called for many explanations.¹ Apuleius encodes his novel with a polyphony of intertextual references for his reader to decode. Some scholars see it as a Platonic allegory of the search of the lost soul for love,² others find elements of folk tales in it.³ Epic features have been pointed out,⁴ and Lucretius' influence on the imagery has been duly noted.⁵ Cupid's characterization draws some features from Hellenistic and Alexandrian poetry,⁶ and echoes of Latin neoteric and elegiac poetry are also visible.⁷ None of the scholars sees himself/herself as giving the only possible explanation, and all these approaches are valid attempts to grasp such an elusive and charming story. Fehling⁸ argues convincingly that there may not have been a single source for Apuleius, but that Apuleius himself is the creator of the story. This does not mean that Apuleius could not draw on ancient myths or literature, but that he created the story himself out of other literature he used. This is the approach I will follow here.

My attempt to link *Cupid and Psyche* with drama is another of these mutually non-exclusive approaches. Scholars have pointed to the recurrent use of *spectaculum* imagery in the tale, where, for example, the first glimpse

¹ A convenient outline: Walsh (1970: 193–8). Cf. also now Zimmerman et al. (2004: 2ff.) for a summary of these various approaches.

² The first one to do so is Fulgentius in his *Libri Mithologiarum* (5th cent. AD, ed. Helm (1898)), who allegorizes *Cupid and Psyche* (3.6), cf. Harrison (2000: 25 n. 99). Recent allegorical approaches: Kenney (1990a and b); Grimal (1976: 19f.); Dowden (1982); more recently, Dowden (1998) even argues for Gnostic allusions. Cf. also O'Brien (2002: 77–90).

³ Criticized by Fehling (1977) (with the older literature p. 11f. with nn.); Hoevels (1979: *passim*) introduces another, magic, layer. Cf. Schlam (1993).

⁴ Most recently by Harrison (1998) with further literature; Finkelpearl (1998); cf. also Lazzarini (1985).

⁵ Cf. e.g. Kenney (1990a: 121 *et passim*).

⁶ Cf. the summary in Walsh (1970: 195f.); Helm (1914) argues against any religious-philosophical interpretation as well as a fairy-tale source, and points out the literariness of the plot with its Hellenistic parallels.

⁷ Mattiacci (1998: 127–49); Kenney (1990a) lists many parallels, e.g. to Ovid (cf. index s.v.).

⁸ e.g. (1977: 25ff.).

we have of Psyche is of her as a spectacle to her fellow citizens in *Met.* 4.29, whilst Psyche later in her tale continually indulges in watching or observing her environment or Cupid.⁹ I shall, however, explain some of the features often criticized as incongruous, such as the portrayal of Venus as suddenly appeared at the end of the story, the occasional breaking of the literary illusion, or the inclusion of Roman law.¹⁰

The attempt to use dramatic terminology in analysing *Cupid and Psyche* is not new:¹¹ Walsh divides the story into five acts with four to five scenes each,¹² but does not proceed to analyse the structure of the story as dramatic. Since the rule of five acts is usually associated with tragedy as well as with New Comedy,¹³ Walsh is criticized by Stabryła¹⁴ for the lack of a tragic catastrophe or development of emotion.¹⁵ The story does not fall easily into this five-act structure, but nevertheless contains enough allusions to drama to justify a study of its dramatic elements. A certain 'metatheatricity' may also be seen in the constant use of the image of the chorus; Venus, for example, has a chorus of nymphs (*Met.* 4.31) and refers to the Muses as a chorus (*Met.* 5.28, cf. 6.24), Psyche's 'marriage to death' is lamented by a *choragium* (*Met.* 4.33), whilst she is serenaded by a chorus of invisible voices in Cupid's *villa* (*Met.* 5.3 and 5.15).¹⁶ Although this image is not specifically dramatic, its constant use indicates a certain amount of theatricality and spectacle.

The content of the tale is specifically Roman in its legal and sociological background. It remains to be seen whether the tale has dramatic elements (both tragic and comic), and then whether one of them might be prominent.

9.2. ELEMENTS OF TRAGEDY

Psyche's introduction as a royal character, an unmarried daughter of a king, and her subsequent exposure on the rocks are well-known patterns from

⁹ e.g. watching Cupid asleep in *Met.* 5.26, or cf. the stress on words indicating vision in the ephrasis of Cupid's palace *Met.* 5.1ff. (cf. also Zimmerman et al. (2004: ad locc.))

¹⁰ Kenney (1990a: index s.v. 'Roman references') for some instances; and the legal commentaries (Norden (1912); Summers (1967) ad locc.).

¹¹ This survey is partly indebted to Frangoulidis (1997: 147 n. 178).

¹² Walsh (1970: 198. f): I *Ira Veneris* (*Met.* 4.28.1–35.4)—II *Amor Cupidinis* (*Met.* 5.1.1–24.5)—III *Psyche errans* (*Met.* 5.25.1–6.8.3)—IV *Psyche apud Venerem* (*Met.* 6.8.4–21.2)—V *Felix Coniugium* (*Met.* 6.21.3–24.4).

¹³ At least since Hor. *Ars* 189.

¹⁴ Stabryła (1973: 265f.).

¹⁵ Nevertheless, Kenney in his commentary (1990a: 20 and 24) takes over the structure and divisions proposed by Walsh, with minor alterations.

¹⁶ Cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: ad locc.).

tragedy. Kings are, according to Aristotle, the right personages for tragedy,¹⁷ as is also stressed by Plautus (*reges*; *Amph.* 61 in the discussion of the play's genre). The beginning of *Cupid and Psyche*, with its stress on Psyche's regal parentage, points in dramatic terms towards a tragedy.¹⁸

Some tragic elements of *Cupid and Psyche* have been analysed by Schiesaro,¹⁹ who discusses its opening in comparison to tragic models, and by Smith: Psyche resembles for example Iphigeneia in being condemned to death by an oracle but rescued for a better fortune.²⁰ The latter's analysis of *Cupid and Psyche* as the mirror of the novel actually stresses that 'Apuleius has also clearly reworked his folktale source in such a way as to actually recall Euripidean tragedy',²¹ His main points of comparison are Venus' hatred and E. *Tr.* 64–86 (Athene's threats against the Greeks) or Aphrodite's anger in E. *Hipp.* 1–4, 20–2 which ends in her cursing of Hippolytos.²² Euripides' deities, overcome by emotions just like humans, seem indeed to be recalled at the beginning of Apuleius' tale.

The second point of comparison is Psyche in her role as sacrificial victim; like Euripides' Andromeda she is the bride of a monster and like her she is exposed on a rock to die;²³ she goes to her death bravely like Macaria (E. *Heracl.* 500–34), whose heroic speech aims to console her relatives in the same way as Psyche's address to her own parents, or like Polyxena (E. *Hec.* 342ff.).²⁴ The heroines of the Greek romances who have similar lines to speak²⁵ also refer back to tragic predecessors.²⁶ Antigone (S. *Ant.* 891ff.) uses imagery similar to that in Psyche's tragic farewell speech to her parents.

¹⁷ *Po.* 1448a. Against a use of the royal rank as an indication of genre: Zimmerman et al. (2004: 38), but in an argument against the folk-tale character of the story.

¹⁸ Zimmerman et al. (2004: 49) (on *Met.* 4.29) discusses the personification of *fama* ('rumour') when Psyche's initial worship as a goddess is introduced, and comments furthermore that the iambic rhythm of the sentence 'sic insulas iam proxumas et terrae plusculum provinciasque plurimas fama porrecta pervagatur' may point to comedy. On the other hand, iambs this pure may equally well point to tragedy.

¹⁹ Schiesaro (1988: 146–8) also draws further comparisons with Medea, Io, Antigone, and Andromeda; cf. also Smith (1998: 73–8).

²⁰ It may be argued that Iphigeneia in Euripides' *Iphigenia Aulidensis* is not actually immolated, but replaced by Artemis with a deer. This is narrated by a messenger within the play, and the other characters know that Iphigeneia is not dead. There is thus a major difference from the plot in Apuleius.

²¹ Smith (1998: 69–82, esp. 73–8).

²² Grimal (1976: 14–17) is primarily interested in mythological parallels, but some of the heroines he compares to Psyche are also tragic heroines.

²³ Cf. also Fehling (1977: 21ff.). For *Andromeda* cf. the play's reconstruction by Bubel (1991). For a magic and *Märchen*-interpretation of these aspects: Hoevens (1979: 48ff.), as the immolation of a 'scapegoat' (*pharmakos*).

²⁴ Cf. the more detailed analysis in Smith (1998: 75), and also Zimmerman et al. (2004: 98f.).

²⁵ e.g. Leukippe in Ach. Tat. 3.7 and 1.13.2.

²⁶ The rhetorical aspects are analysed by Schissel (1941: 106–111).

The death of a girl shortly before her wedding is a theme exploited mainly in tragedy.²⁷ The story also begins with an oracle dooming the heroine like Oedipus or Orestes.

Walsh also compares Psyche's being torn apart by conflicting emotions ('Festinat differt, audet trepidat, diffidit irascitur, et, quod est ultimum, in eodem corpore odit bestiam diligit maritum', ('She made haste, she temporized; her daring turned to fear, her diffidence to anger, and to cap everything she loathed the beast but loved the husband', *Met.* 5.21)) with the dilemmas of Medea in Euripides' and Seneca's tragedies and with those of Greek novelistic heroines.²⁸ Apuleius, when he describes Psyche as 'aegra corporis, animi saucia' ('sick in body, and wounded at heart'; *Met.* 4.32), definitely wants to link her with Ennius' *Medea*.²⁹ It is, however, already a comic-bathetic approach, since this passage is not used when Psyche is about to murder her husband, as one might think, but only when she is bored and unhappy because no suitor claims her hand. Io is in the foreground when Psyche has to undergo her wanderings; both are mortal maidens pursued by a vindictive and jealous goddess.³⁰

A last point is Psyche's taking revenge on her sisters, as she changes from the tragic *persona* of 'sacrificial daughter' to that of the 'avenging relative'³¹ like Medea, Hecuba, or Phaedra. Although the situations of these heroines are not strictly comparable (none of them kills her sisters or avenges an attempt to deceive her into murdering her husband), it is indeed striking that Psyche has some vengeful streaks in her personality resulting in death within her own family.³²

Similarly, Venus' anger has been compared to that of the epic Iuno pursuing Aeneas, or of Aphrodite in Euripides' *Hippolytos*. The anger of Apuleius' Venus, however, appears to be much pettier than that of the other goddesses,

²⁷ On 'tragic weddings': Seaford (1987: *passim*). Szepessy (1972) analyses the influence of Hellenistic poetry on Apuleius and Heliodoros in the exact shaping of the contrast between burial and wedding, but Seaford shows that the concept is older. For tragic examples cf. Rehm (1994).

²⁸ Walsh (1970: 206 with n. 2) compares E. *Med.* 1042ff. and Sen. *Med.* 893ff. as well as Ach. Tat. 2.25 and X. Eph. 2.5. Cf. now also Zimmerman et al. (2004: 267).

²⁹ Cf. Ennius *scaen.* 254 Vahlen (2) = 216 Jocelyn. 'Medea animo aegro amore saevo saucia', 'Medea, sick at heart, wounded through savage love'. On the fragment: cf. Jocelyn (1967: 355f.). Cf. Mattiacci (1998: 136) and (1986: 185ff.).

³⁰ Walsh (1970: 52f.) with further literature. Io is linked with Isis (Walsh (1970: 221 n. 4)).

³¹ Thus Smith (1998: 75), who also compares Hecuba's revenge on Polymestor by taking advantage of his greed (E. *Hec.* 1012).

³² Psyche, however, does not do the killing herself, and thus does not quite become the tragic heroine that Smith sees in her. She only deceives her sisters into believing that Cupid would love and marry them; only their blind trust, strictly speaking, in Cupid and Zephyrus leads to their end.

since it is based on jealousy for a beautiful girl and the fear of appearing too old and less desirable.

9.3. BEYOND TRAGEDY

The tragic elements are primarily (although not exclusively) clustered at the beginning of the story,³³ but there are some contradictory elements there, too, for example when the girl is surprisingly not sacrificed but married (and then not to death, but to Cupid). In the course of the story, elements of other genres may be influential, too.

The tragic elements do not form the end of Psyche's story: 'If this were an actual tragedy it might have ended soon after this point [i.e. the revenge on the sisters].'³⁴ She could have gone into exile (like Medea), or one of her various suicide attempts could have succeeded (like Phaedra's). The point is, however, that her story does *not* end there. Indeed, like Helen in Euripides' unusual tragedy of the same name, she will find her husband again, and after all her travails will be married and live happily ever after. Stories ending in happy marriages are usually not tragic material. Smith himself points out this inconsistency with the tragic theme he detects in *Cupid and Psyche*, since

Euripides' endings in such plays [i.e. plays ending in marriage like *Electra* or *Orestes*] have an air of cynicism about them, as though he were calling attention to absurdities in a myth or his predecessors' treatment of it. In contrast, the joyful ending of the 'Psyche' tale seems more simple and pure

and recalls the ending of Menander's *Dyskolos*.³⁵ Although this particular example is perhaps not happily chosen—Knemon is unwillingly *forced* to dance at his daughter's wedding, whereas Venus dances as a sign of reconciliation—the intrusion of comedy into a tragic atmosphere is definitely present, and already, as discussed above, at an early stage of the story, a quotation from Ennius' *Medea* is comically used out of context.

Euripides is relevant here; the wedding in *Orestes* has a bitter taste to it, but is still described in the play's second hypothesis as having a 'rather comic turning-point', a 'κωμικωτέρα καταστροφή'.³⁶ A wedding at the end of a play does thus apparently add the feeling of a comic influence, even when it is as cynical as in Euripides' play.

³³ Exceptions: e.g. Psyche's indecision at the first sight of Cupid and her willingness to take revenge on her sisters.—Cf. Schiesaro (1988: 142) for the 'tinte fosche' of *Met.* 4.28–35.

³⁴ Smith (1998: 76).

³⁵ Smith (1998: 81f.).

³⁶ Seidensticker (1982: 103).

There may even be an echo of mime here: the 'Oxyrhynchus mime' *Charition* (*P.Oxy.* III.413 *recto*), which is also interesting in connection with Charite, follows the plotline of some Greek novels: its heroine Charition has been carried off by pirates, then has taken refuge in a temple, where her brother comes to rescue her from the clutches of a barbarian king. It seems to be a mimic version of Euripides' *Iphigeneia Taurica*. This mime, although not without literary ambition, is not on the same level of literariness and sophistication as Apuleius' tale, but indicates nevertheless that a comicization of tragedy is a well-established literary technique.

Let us turn to one of Smith's points hitherto not mentioned. He argues that Apollo's oracle in Miletus, which gives its answer in Latin instead of Greek (*Met.* 4.32), is a nice *Euripidean* touch.³⁷ He tries to prove this notion with *E. Tr.* 885–9 and 1049–51 (exchanges between Hecuba and Menelaos) and *E. Ba.* 266ff. (Teiresias' sophisticated explanation of the Dionysiac cult), both of which, he claims, show a similar joking spirit. These comparisons seem inconclusive to me. The first example is rather cynical and is meant to express the helplessness of the Trojan women before their Greek captor, and the second, though rendering a 'modern' explanation of the cult, is still 'pious',³⁸ and since these statements are spoken 'within character' they form no authorial intrusion, and neither leaves the plane of tragedy behind as does the Apuleian phrase.³⁹

This stepping outside the level of the story and playing with inconsistencies is rather a *comic* scheme, where characters may speak *extra personam* to the audience; sometimes even issues of languages and their understanding arise. The *Poenulus* partly lives on this sort of linguistic comicality. Furthermore, Plautus now and then refers to 'barbaric', that is Roman, elements in his comedy as a game between Greek and Latin—one example among many is *Capt.* 880–4, with Hegio asking Latin questions and Ergasilus answering in Greek, culminating in (l. 884):

ERGASILUS ναὶ τὸν Ἀλάτριον—HEGIO quid tu per barbaricas
urbis iuras?

(ERGASILUS Yes, by Alatrium.—HEGIO Why do you swear by barbarian cities?)

Alatrium is a town in Latium,⁴⁰ and Plautus is playing on *res Romanae* introduced into an originally 'Greek' play which is of course performed in

³⁷ Smith (1998: 73f.).

³⁸ Both words from Dodds (1960: 99) (ad *Ba.* 274f.).

³⁹ Cf. the discussion in Seidensticker (1982: 89–91) of *Tr.* 1050, where the expression used sharpens both the tragedy of Hekabe and the bitterness of the Trojan fate.

⁴⁰ Lindsay (1921: 110).

Latin in Rome.⁴¹ This is not an exact parallel for a Latin author telling us that for once Apollo speaks Latin instead of Greek for his Latin-speaking audience's sake, but the principle of making the two languages and different concepts of foreignness from an inverted point of view a vehicle for comicality is comparable.

Other comic intrusions into a potentially tragic plot are the dramatic ironies immediately clear to a careful reader who has deciphered the Milesian oracle correctly as pointing towards Cupid. When Psyche addresses her unknown (and hitherto unnamed) husband with the words: 'amo enim et efflictim te, quicumque es, diligo aequè ut meum spiritum, nec ipsi Cupidini comparo' ('For I love and cherish you passionately, whoever you are, as much as my own life, and I value you higher than Cupid himself'; *Met.* 5.6.7),⁴² this is dramatic irony. A further example is the sisters' statement that Psyche and her unknown husband's child will be as beautiful as Cupid (*Met.* 5.14.5). This resembles closely the dramatic irony employed in Plautus' *Amphitruo*, where the human characters unknowingly and frequently call for aid the very gods who are deceiving them, for example *Amph.* 435f.:⁴³

SOSIA Per Iovem iuro med esse neque me falsum dicere.

MERCURIUS At ego per Mercurium iuro tibi Iovem non credere.

(SOSIA I swear by Jupiter that I am not lying!—MERCURIUS But I swear by Mercury that Jupiter does not believe you!)

It is thus evident that already from an early stage in the story the tragic and gloomy setting is undermined by some light-hearted and comic elements. The interaction of the two dramatic genres is present for the whole story. Comedy and tragedy balance each other and are set against each other consciously.

This is important for the structural development of the story, since it does not allow the readers to expect that a straightforward tragedy will evolve before their eyes. Instead, they are kept curious, and after the first gloomy part of the story, the echoes of tragedy move into the background. Epic themes come in (Psyche's quests),⁴⁴ and at the end the wedding feast is undeniably comic.

⁴¹ Kraus (1934: 81). A similar point is stressed by Benz (2000: 169) on *Stich.* 193–5.

⁴² Rosati (1997: 125f.): parallel to Charite and some further Apuleian examples. On whether *efflictim* is to be taken with *amo* or with *diligo* cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 149).

⁴³ Cf. *Amph.* 435, 455, 461f., 569–70 etc. and Christenson (2000: 32) for further examples.

⁴⁴ Even within the epic tasks, however, a rare allusion to Old Comedy can be traced in Psyche's idea of throwing herself off a tower to reach the underworld (*Met.* 6.17). This seems to reflect Ar. *Ra.* 129ff., where Dionysos is told by Herakles (among other suggestions) to throw

9.4. COMEDY

Apuleius himself makes his character Venus describe the illicit love-affair between her son and Psyche as 'domus meae famosa fabula' ('the scandalous *fabula* concerning my household'; *Met.* 5.31.2, trans. adapted).⁴⁵ *Fabula* can be a technical term for comedy, and the stress on Venus' 'house' and 'family', which she sees as fallen into disrepute, points to the bourgeois setting of the whole story. We are thus free to analyse the comic elements in the plot. Other elements that are evidently comic are for example the marriage at the end, the child conceived (almost) out of wedlock, and the acceptance of a seemingly lower-class (mortal) girl into the upper-class bourgeois (immortal) family by marriage. The stock characters, too, will have to be looked at in detail. The question of how the undoubtedly present tragic elements are interwoven with comic ones, and to what extent the result can still be called comic, is a central issue.

Schlam⁴⁶ and Konstan⁴⁷ are to some extent concerned with comedy in Apuleius. These critics mention the similarities between *Cupid and Psyche* and comedy, but it is only Frangoulidis who dedicates a lengthy study to this comparison.⁴⁸ In his book, to which his study of *Cupid and Psyche* is an appendix, he offers an analysis of metatheatrical elements in Plautus and Terence, concentrating on role-playing and performance theory. He mainly concentrates on metatheatricity in the comic intrigues, and the different roles characters take over within the play to pursue the intrigue.

Frangoulidis' analysis of the different intrigues employed by Venus to forestall Cupid's and Psyche's wedding is very useful. He points out well that the characters in the story are acting parts as in a play, and that they change their roles; for example Cupid plays a different part from usual when he takes over the role of Psyche's invisible husband. However, this approach is double edged. On the one hand, it reminds the reader that the characters are actually fictional, and Frangoulidis' use of theatrical metaphors and stress on their role-playing helps to point that out. On the other hand, the use of theatrical language, as in Frangoulidis' approach to themes which are essentially non-theatrical in the classical sense, is misleading. Cupid's

himself off a high tower to begin his own *katabasis* to the underworld: Walsh (1970: 215); Kenney (1990a: ad loc.); cf. Ch. 8, above and Zimmerman et al. (2004: 488ff.) for comic allusions in this task.

⁴⁵ Cf. Ch. 5.3 above on *fabula*.

⁴⁶ Schlam (1992: 40–7) deals with the Bakhtinian view of the novel as carnivalesque rather than dealing with it as influenced by the comic genre.

⁴⁷ Konstan (1994: 135, 137–8).

⁴⁸ Frangoulidis (1997: 145–77).

invisibility, for example, is not a mask in the ancient sense.⁴⁹ Thus to state that the characters are actors in Cupid's drama, implying that Cupid pulls the strings behind the scenes in a metatheatrical way though he is himself an actor in Venus' abortive drama of victimizing Psyche, has little to do with the ancient way of understanding drama, but is rather a modern approach to role-playing and performance theory.⁵⁰ Modern concepts of people continually playing roles in their interaction with other human beings may use the same language as ancient drama, but signify something rather different: the material studied is analysed in a social and psychological, and not a literary, way.⁵¹ Using the language of drama to describe the interaction between the protagonists does not prove that comedy was on Apuleius' mind when he designed the multi-layered literary structure of *Cupid and Psyche*, or that an ancient reader would have interpreted it in this way. Frangoulidis' analysis has some interesting things to say about Apuleius' use of this literary genre, but his account essentially mingles a literary with a sociologist's approach, and he states that he uses the language of drama 'metaphorically'.⁵²

In the following discussion the scope will be limited again to a purely literary analysis of the dramatic elements in the story. The discussion will corroborate some of Frangoulidis' statements about stock characters, but the angle will be different.

An additional point is that the whole story of *Cupid and Psyche* is included in the Charite complex, which is another episode of the *Metamorphoses* in which the reader is led to expect one sort of dramatic genre and is finally (although only after the story of *Cupid and Psyche*) left with another. Charite's rescue by her bridegroom is remarkably comic, but the couple's end is equally recognizably tragic.

9.5. MYTHOLOGICAL TRAVESTIES IN COMEDY: PLAUTUS' *AMPHITRUO*

There may have been several sources even within comic drama in Apuleius' mind when he wrote the mythological travesty of *Cupid and Psyche*. It would

⁴⁹ Which is what Frangoulidis (1997: 146) maintains.

⁵⁰ Cf. the reader-response theory applied to Petronius by Slater (1990a), who also uses 'comic' in a wider sense.

⁵¹ Cf. Frangoulidis (1997: 148): 'My use of the term performance is closer to sociolinguistics who employ the term "narrative performance" to describe a type of particularly involved and dramatized narrative.'

⁵² Frangoulidis (1997: 148): 'My use of such terms as drama, theatre and counter-drama is meant to be understood metaphorically.'

be helpful if we had more of these mythological travesties of antiquity.⁵³ The *phlyax* vase-paintings⁵⁴ from Southern Italy possibly portray Old and Middle Comedies performed on Italian ground, and some of them picture erotic scenes,⁵⁵ but *Cupid and Psyche* does not seem to feature in them, though at least Jupiter, Mercury, and other gods seem to have appeared in farcical situations and without any hint of seriousness.⁵⁶

Mime, too, occasionally seems to feature mythological parody, for example, as the title may indicate,⁵⁷ Laberius' *Anna Peranna* (Bonaria (1955–6: fr. 9–12)). Gods appear on the mime stage, too: Jupiter and Juno possibly speak in Laberius' *Ephebus*.⁵⁸ The mimes of Lentulus and Hostilius interestingly seem to include a mime on *Anubis as Adulterer*. *Charition* (*P.Oxy.* III.413 *recto*) forms a mime version of Euripides' *Iphigenia Taurica* (discussed above).⁵⁹ Mime may thus also offer a useful comic intertext. Too little is, however, preserved to make any confident judgement on the Roman mime's method of employing mythological parody.

In Roman comedy, mythological parody seems to have been rare. Mythological travesty was present in the *phlyakes* and presumably some of the Atellan farces, but it is quite possible that Plautus' *Amphitruo* was the 'first performance of a mythological travesty on a Roman stage'.⁶⁰ We are thus left with *Amphitruo* as the only complete extant Greek New or Roman comedy which has gods acting the main parts in the comic action. Apuleius must have known this alphabetically first *fabula Varroniana*, which was apparently one of the favourite plays of the late empire.⁶¹

The source of the *Amphitruo* and its genre is still a matter of debate. The discussion of the play's genre within the prologue is very important (ll. 50–63): it is characterized as a *tragicomoedia*, including personages of both comedy and tragedy. Slater⁶² assumes a similarity between *Amphitruo*

⁵³ Cf. Ch. 12.3 below on mythological travesty.

⁵⁴ e.g. Taplin (1993: 36f. and *passim*).

⁵⁵ Cf. Bieber (1961: 136–9), who also points out some (sometimes fanciful) similarities to Plautine plots.

⁵⁶ Duckworth (1994: 13). On Epicharmus' putative use of mythological travesties in his comedy cf. id. p. 18ff., on the topic in Old Comedy p. 21f. For a critical approach to the association of *phlyax* vases with Rhinthon cf. Taplin (1993: 48ff., with cross-references).

⁵⁷ A debated issue, cf. Wüst in *RE* (1932: s.v. 'Mimos', col. 1746) who lists other evidence for mythological travesty (col 1752).

⁵⁸ Cf. Horsfall (1979: 331f.); Kehoe (1984: 100).

⁵⁹ On the evidence for a possible Atalanta mime cf. Horsfall (1985: 263).

⁶⁰ Christenson (2000: 24).

⁶¹ 'If Arnobius' and Prudentius' testimony to revival performances of *Am.* in the late empire is to be trusted, the play must have been a perennial favourite in the Roman comic repertoire.'—Christenson (2000: 35).

⁶² Slater (1990b); analysed in detail in Christenson (2000: 54f.).

and Euripidean tragedy, although his thesis that Plautus imitates *Bacchae* may not convince everyone. The similarities are of a structural rather than of an intertextual kind. Notwithstanding this, Slater's analysis shows the intrinsic similarities between Plautus' tragic comedy and Euripidean drama. Lefèvre assumes a Latin adaptation of Euripides' *Alkmene* as the source.⁶³ Whether it is Plautus himself who adapts a Latin tragedy into a *tragicomoedia*, or whether, as Blänsdorf assumes,⁶⁴ the lost Greek original, is already tragicomic, the fact remains that a potentially tragic plot is turned into a comic one by a clever adaptor.

Interestingly, the word *tragicomoedia* occurs in ancient literature only in one work, in the prologue to the Plautine *Amphitruo* (l. 54f.; 59–63):⁶⁵

eandem hanc, si voltis, faciam ex tragoedia
 comoedia ut sit omnibus isdem vorsibus.

 faciam ut commixta sit; <sit> tragicomoedia;
 nam me perpetuo facere ut sit comoedia,
 reges quo veniant et di, non par arbitrator.
 quid igitur? quoniam hic servos quoque partes habet,
 faciam sit, proinde ut dixi, tragicomoedia.

(If you want me to, I will make it a comedy, with all the lines left unchanged. [...] I will mix it and make it a tragicomedy. For it cannot be, I believe, right to make it a comedy, when all these kings and gods come along. What then? Because here also a slave will have his part, I will make it, as I said before, a tragicomedy.)

Christenson gives a useful discussion of the possible sources of Plautus' *Amphitruo*.⁶⁶ He does not come to a single conclusion, but summarizes his survey:

the question of sources best reduces itself to a pair of closely related alternatives: Plautus most probably either adapted a mythical travesty belonging to the period of Middle Comedy or converted a tragedy into one himself. The former view assumes at least one Greek comic playwright as intermediary in the process, the latter maintains that the accomplished Roman playwright, working in his mature years, could be just as original as this hypothetical Greek intermediary.⁶⁷

⁶³ Lefèvre (1982: 19f.; 37), with the older literature. He also points out that Jupiter does not occur in New Comedy on stage, but only in tragedy—and that very rarely (cf. *ibid.* 25). He restates his argument in Lefèvre (1999: 12–15).

⁶⁴ Blänsdorf (1979).

⁶⁵ Cf. Lefèvre (1982: 23); Christenson (2000: 149). Other more frequent words like *hilaro-tragoidia* or *komoïdotragodia*, however, occur, cf. Christenson (2000: 149).

⁶⁶ Cf. Christenson (2000: 47–50) for tragic, comic, and other dramatic adaptation of the Alkmene myth; pp. 50–5 for a good discussion of the different theories involved.

⁶⁷ Christenson (2000: 55).

It is unknown whether Plautus wrote other comedies based on the parody of mythological material.⁶⁸ It is, however, important to my argument that gods and heroes are portrayed in much the same vein as human fallible characters. For example, Jupiter, though never giving up his status as a god (and thus as a character from tragedy), takes on the role of the comic lover, while his son Mercury willingly describes his role as that of a cunning slave or parasite (none of which occurs in tragedy) who is to further his father's / master's amours.⁶⁹

Although there are some basic differences between the divine comedy of the *Amphitruo* and the bourgeois Athenian, Epidamnian, and other family troubles of other comedies, the problem of the integrity of the family, the bearing of children, anxiety about the woman's faithfulness, the final reconciliation of the couple, and the birth of the family's children are common motifs in both the burlesque and the bourgeois type of comedy.

Amphitruo abounds in paratragedy, as already announced by Mercury in his prologue. Consequently, the distinction between comic and tragic elements becomes even more fluid in this play than in other comedies, and the gods are represented in a very human and comic way.

9.6. PLAUTINE TRAGICOMEDY AND APULEIUS' *CUPID AND PSYCHE*

For the discussion of Apuleius' *Cupid and Psyche* the question of a tragic or a comic origin of the plot of *Amphitruo* is of more importance than its solution. It does not matter greatly whether it was Plautus or a Greek comic writer who adapted a tragedy into a tragicomedy. It is, however, important that the interplay between comedy and tragedy, between *dei ex machina* and running slaves, between gods taking part in the action and the unknowing humans who act out the gods' schemes, is a comic concept that Apuleius could have found in either Greek or Roman comedy. In both *Cupid and Psyche* and in the novel as a whole, it is the interaction between the divine and the human sphere which brings the human actors to the verge of destruction, although in the tale this interaction is more apparent to the reader to start with than in the novel, where only at the end, at the appearance of Isis as the *dea ex machina*, is

⁶⁸ Cf. Muth (1992: 135–47) for some of these points.

⁶⁹ Parasite: cf. *Amph.* 515 'subparasitabor patri' ('I will play parasite to my father', cf. l. 521) and 993 'amanti subparasitor', l. 126 and III.4 for the *servus currens*.

the divine sphere revealed to Lucius and the reader. The approach to adapting a tragic plot into something comic is the same. From this kind of crossing of genres it is only one step, I shall argue, to Apuleius' adaptation of comic and tragic elements into the same fictional plot, allowing his readers to find allusions to both genres and to draw their conclusions (true and false) from this.

There are several similarities between Plautus' approach and Apuleius': gods act like human beings and take over the roles of stock characters. The dénouement in both stories is achieved only by the appearance of a *deus ex machina*. The *Amphitruo* has a *deus ex machina* appearance of Jupiter at the end, but since Jupiter also takes part in the plot proper it is not an unexpected appearance as in Euripidean drama. Without going into detail, Grimal⁷⁰ also observes these similarities between the Jupiters of Plautus and Apuleius.⁷¹

In the prologue of the *Amphitruo*, Plautus talks about the mixing of stock characters from tragedy (kings) and comedy (slaves) in a single play.⁷² Although this generic discussion uses *tragicomoedia*, later on the play is always referred to as *comoedia*⁷³ by the gods or as *fabula*;⁷⁴ a comedy remains a comedy even when gods are involved in it, especially since the gods act in a very human way.⁷⁵ In the next sections the different *dramatis personae* will be analysed primarily in respect of their generic affiliation, but some comic stock scenes and features will be noted as well, such as the 'tragic' *deus ex machina* or the comic wedding.

⁷⁰ Grimal (1976: 24): 'Apulée se révèle ici, comme en maint autre passage des *Métamorphoses*, grand lecteur de Plaute: le Jupiter qui réconcilie Psyché et Vénus est le même qui, autrefois, avait dupé Amphitryon.'

⁷¹ Already Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poesie* (1595) discusses the problematic generic status of some of his contemporary tragedies, and uses both *Amphitruo* and Apuleius as his examples to condemn his contemporaries' treatment of dramatic characterization: 'But besides these grosse absurdities, howe all their Playes bee neither right Tragedies, nor right Comedies, mingling Kinges and Clownes, not because the matter so carrieth it, but thrust in the Clowne by head and shoulders to play a part in majesticall matters, with neither decencie nor discretion: so as neither the admiration and Commiseration, nor the right sportfulnesse is by their *mongrell Tragicomedie* obtained. I know *Apuleius* did somewhat so, but that is a thing recounted with space of time, not represented in one moment: and I know the Auncients have one or two examples of Tragicomedies, as Plautus has *Amphitrio*.'

⁷² Christenson (2000: 147 and generally) ad *Amph.* 51–63.

⁷³ Cf. *Amph.* 88, 96, 868, 987.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Amph.* e.g. 90, 94, 152.

⁷⁵ On the problem of tragic elements in *Amph.* e.g. Manuwald (1999).

9.7. APULEIUS' DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Cupid: the *adulescens amans* or young man in love

The character of Cupid is derived from a rich literary ancestry containing elements as diverse as Hellenistic epigram, Roman love elegy, and Platonic philosophy. In addition to that, it will be argued, he has also a comic component. Cupid, who is given a full but contradictory characterization, also shares some features with some young men of comedy: he has barely grown old enough to be an *adulescens*,⁷⁶ and his mother (like the stern father or pedagogue in comedy) considers him as a *puer*, too young to have a girlfriend, using a comic phrase to say so: 'hoc aetatis puer' ('a mere boy of tender years') recalls the expression 'hoc aetatis senex' in Plaut. *Bacch.* 343.⁷⁷ It is the *adulescens* in comedy who then rebels against his parents or guardian and starts an affair with a girl. Other comic phrases occur in her speech: 'bonaeque tuae frugi' ('a decent man like you'; *Met.* 5.29.2) cf. Plaut. *Asin.* 602, *Trin.* 320, (cf. Cic. *Cael.* 12). Also 'quid agam? Quo me conferam?' ('what shall I do, where shall I betake myself?'), cf. Ter. *Hec.* 516 'quid agam? Quo me vertam?'—'What shall I do, where shall I turn?'⁷⁸ These questions form an element of the 'rhetoric of desperation' with its tragic origins, but also occur in comic adaptations, for example *Merc.* 335ff., *Aul.* 713–26.⁷⁹

The *adulescentes* usually keep their love secret from their parents, especially when the girl is not of equal social status (for example, Pasicompsa in *Mercator*). Other reasons for secrecy are for example the citizen girl's pregnancy. In that case, the relationship is often only revealed after the baby's birth, as for example in Terence's *Adelphoe*. Cupid's love for Psyche is quite illicit. Not only is his mother strictly against it,⁸⁰ he also secretly rebels against her objection. He loves a girl far below his social standing, and circumvents the necessary agreement of his parent by entering a marriage-like

⁷⁶ Charinus is this age when he meets his first love (*Merc.* 40ff.), also Pistoclerus in *Bacchides* is so young that he still has a *paedagogus*, cf. *Bacch.* 109–69. Chaerea in *Eunuchus* is even younger than Charinus.

⁷⁷ *Met.* 5.29; cf. Grimal (1976: ad loc.), and now also Zimmerman et al. (2004: 336); cf. also *Ba.* 1100.

⁷⁸ Grimal (1976: ad locc.), also quoted by Hoevels (1979: 129f.) without indicating his sources.

⁷⁹ Cf. Fowler (1987: esp. 36ff.) on comic adaptations of the tragic motif.

⁸⁰ Cf. e.g. *Met.* 5.24.—Frangoulidis (1997: 150) is right in pointing out that the union between Cupid and Psyche lacks the right formalities (cf. also Kenney (1990a: 203)), but their union is concubinage, not adultery, since neither of the participants is married to another person (cf. also Frangoulidis (1997: 160)).

relationship with Psyche unknown to his mother. Since the wedding takes place without witnesses in a country villa,⁸¹ it could under certain circumstances be seen as not a marriage but a concubinage, which is similar to a marriage in its duration but different in legal terms.

Some couples in comedy, whose difference of social status prevents them from marrying, actually come to the same agreement and consider themselves as good as married. For example Philematium and Philolaches in the *Mostellaria*, or Selenium and Alcesimarchus in the *Cistellaria* live in such marriage-like concubinage,⁸² and in the case of the latter the couple's faithfulness is rewarded by the girl's recognition as a citizen, an event which enables them to marry properly.

Cupid, cunning in taking hold of Psyche at first, is then quite helpless after their separation, when he is lying sick in his mother's palace wounded by love (a concept often found in Greek epigram and elegy), and he too helpless to rescue his beloved himself, has to rely on his servants to look after Psyche and his love interest. This identification with the rather helpless young lover from comedy, who is earnestly in love with his girl, but unable to secure her without help, is perhaps behind his rather contradictory characterization, his 'schizoid personality [. . .] alternating uneasily between earnest lover and wanton boy.'⁸³

Psyche: The Lost Girl from Comedy

Psyche's *ethopoia* has hitherto been analysed as belonging to the tragic genre.⁸⁴ Certainly, many of her character traits reflect the use of the genre to enhance her personality, to give it depth and create compassion in the reader. Some of her characterization, however, can be traced back to the comic genre, too. It is perhaps important that the tragic references, as already argued, cluster mainly around the beginning of the tale: her regal parents, her farewell speech to them, her readiness to be immolated all occur before the central theme of the tale, the love between *Cupid and Psyche*, really starts, and even then they may be comically undercut, as for example by the quotation from *Medea* in a paratragic context. Love between two persons and the way towards its fulfilment is not the central theme of tragedy, but the domain of comedy.⁸⁵

⁸¹ On the startling similarities between Psyche's wedding and that of Apuleius himself and Pudentilla cf. Kenney (1990a: 203).

⁸² Examples from Menander include *Samia* and *Perikeiromene*.

⁸³ Walsh (1970: 217). ⁸⁴ Cf. Ch. 9.2.

⁸⁵ Influential, perhaps, may be Euripides' *Andromeda* and *Helen*, both plays with a 'happy' ending.

Thus it will prove helpful to trace some of Psyche's features, especially in the latter part of her story, back to comedy.⁸⁶

Psyche is called *puella scitula* ('an elegant girl'),⁸⁷ an expression only found in Plautus and Apuleius; other instances of *scitula* in Apuleius characterize Meroe and Photis and, ironically, an old hag, and, as I have argued,⁸⁸ point to comic provenance. The adjective occurs twice in Plautus' *Rudens*.⁸⁹ There it is linked to a girl of at first unknown status. The *Rudens* features several scenes comparable to tragedies⁹⁰ and is perhaps significant to Apuleius because of its unusual setting in North African Cyrene.

The heroine of *Rudens*, Palaestra, and Psyche share some features; for example both are girls driven to foreign shores from the bosoms of their families, and after several ordeals both try to find refuge in the temple of a goddess. The setting of the *Rudens* is outside a temple of Venus on the Cyrenaean shore (*Rud.* 61), and Palaestra decides to take refuge there from her pursuers.⁹¹

quisquis est deus, veneror ut nos ex hac aerumna eximat,
miseras, inopes, aerumnosas ut aliquo auxilio adiuvet.

(Whoever this god might be, I pray to him to deliver us from this distress, us wretched, poor, distressed women, and to give us some help.)

She is at first denied entry by Venus' priestess Ptolemycratia because of her ragged appearance,⁹² but at last is allowed to enter and take shelter. Psyche, too, is a suppliant to a goddess' temple, but is denied refuge twice; Ceres does not let her in (*Met.* 6.1–2), and Juno, too, denies her access to her temple (*Met.* 6.3–4). The latter passage even contains a direct allusion to Palaestra in the *Rudens*: 'Tunc genu nixa et manibus aram tepentem amplexa detersis ante lacrimis sic adprecatur' ('[Psyche] sank to her knees, and with her hands she grasped the altar still warm from a sacrifice. She wiped away her tears, and then uttered this prayer'; *Met.* 6.3) recalls Plaut. *Rud.* 694f.: 'Venus alma,

⁸⁶ Other literary genres come into account as well: most of the tasks Psyche has to fulfil under Venus' command share mythological, but epic rather than tragic, features such as the second task, the collecting of wool from the golden flock, which is reminiscent of the *Argonautika*, or the help of Jupiter's eagle and the allusion to Ganymede in the third task. Cf. Walsh (1970: 214f.) for more examples; on epic as the intertext of the tasks cf. Harrison (1998: 61f.).

⁸⁷ *Met.* 5.25.

⁸⁸ *Met.* 1.7 (Meroe) and 2.6 (Photis); cf. above Ch. 6.3 and 7.3.

⁸⁹ *Rud.* 565, 894.

⁹⁰ Old but very useful: Marx (1928 = 1959: 274–82), who compares the *Rudens* with *Amphitruo* and *Captivi* with respect to their use of tragic paraplots.

⁹¹ *Rud.* 256f.

⁹² *Rud.* 270f. 'ad hoc | fanum ad istunc modum non veniri solet' ('It is not customary to come to this temple in that manner:').

ambae te obsecramus, | aram amplexantes hanc tuam lacrimantes, genibus nixae.' ('Kind Venus, we both beseech you and embrace your altar here, in tears and on our knees.').⁹³

Especially interesting is that here the motif of Psyche as a runaway slave, introduced by Venus in *Met.* 5.31 and seemingly accepted by Psyche in *Met.* 6.1 ('servilibus precibus' ('with a servant's entreaties')), is resumed. This motif is an inconsistency with the beginning of the story, as Walsh notes,⁹⁴ and even defies legal explanation in an otherwise legally rather correct text.⁹⁵ Scholars believing in a folktale source of the story link this to tales where the girl is usually the slave of a witch; mythological comparisons have been pressed, too. There might however be a comic allusion, especially when Venus compares herself to a *lena*.

Juno denies Psyche shelter because of '[leges] quae servos alienos profugos invitis dominis vetant suscipi'—'the legislation which forbids sanctuary for runaway slaves belonging to others, if their owners forbid it'.⁹⁶ Tragic suppliants at temple altars are never slaves, but for example maidens reluctant to marry, and slaves taking refuge at altars is a comic theme, although it is usually the cunning slave (for example Tranio in the *Mostellaria*) who has recourse to this means after his schemes are discovered. Girls enslaved to a *leno* trying to take refuge with a goddess only occur in the tragicomic *Rudens*. Indeed, Palaestra and her companion Ampelisca are on the run from their owner Labrax, a *leno* who was shipwrecked with them and has temporarily lost them on the shore of Cyrene.

In this light, the next sentence in Apuleius might take on additional colour: 'isto quoque Fortunae naufragio Psyche perterrita' ('Psyche was aghast at this second shipwreck devised by Fortune'; *Met.* 6.5.1), although a common enough image,⁹⁷ can be taken intertextually, to refer to the shipwreck in the Plautine play, which Palaestra also blames on Fortune.⁹⁸ There might even be an intentional reversal in the fact that the temple of Venus takes in the two shipwrecked girls in the *Rudens*, while Psyche is denied refuge twice in other temples and finally arrives at Venus' *domus* to give herself over voluntarily to her mistress and owner (*Met.* 6.8.4).

⁹³ Cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 385 with references).

⁹⁴ Walsh (1970: 210). For mythological influences cf. his n. 2. Psyche as a runaway slave also recalls a poem by Meleager (*AP.* 12.80), who fears that Eros will catch his soul and torture it like a runaway slave.

⁹⁵ Norden (1912: 76).

⁹⁶ *Met.* 6.4.5.

⁹⁷ Kenney (1990a: ad loc.). The intertext to *Rudens* is tentatively accepted by Zimmerman et al. (2004: 395).

⁹⁸ Cf. Palaestra's first words in the play (185ff.).

Psyche is claimed by Venus as her *ancilla*, her maidservant, although this relation is not mentioned as such before. Before *Met.* 5.31.2, Venus is content to consider her as her enemy and rival whom she wants destroyed. Only after the tragic beginning of the tale, long after Psyche is characterized sufficiently as a tragic heroine, is the second, in part contradictory, characterization as a runaway slave introduced, which points to a comic—or rather tragicomic—characterization, and, like Palaestra, Psyche flees from a *leno* figure who enslaved her.

But just as in her tragic part Psyche is not identified with one particular tragic heroine, but flits from one of them to another, her characterization through comic motifs is not consistent. Whilst Palaestra is a *virgo*-turned-slave, a freeborn citizen stranded on the rocks of Fate, Psyche seems to be married to her suitor in the beginning and only then becomes the *ancilla* of Venus. This marriage is however, as already indicated, not legal in all circumstances.⁹⁹ Most importantly, it is not between equals and is without the parents' consent. It should be inspected more closely.

Psyche's Marriage

Psyche's reward in marrying her love is consistent with common folklore motifs¹⁰⁰ but also the 'tradition of Hellenistic burlesque of Olympian revelry' as Helm notes. He points out several similarities between *Cupid and Psyche* and the Lucianic *Council of the Gods*: in both works, Mercury is employed as a *praeco* ('auctioneer'); both works end with a speech by Jupiter in the final council, and the description of the final *cena* reminds Helm of *Ikaromenippos* 27,¹⁰¹ which has a similar *dramatis personae* involved in a feast and itself might ultimately be inspired by comedy.¹⁰² Lucian is indeed often dependent on comedy,¹⁰³ and the idea of Psyche's marriage being a comic reminiscence is to be pursued here.

In reality, weddings could take place without the parents' permission, but this never happens in comedy, where the parents' consent is part of the comic ethos.¹⁰⁴ Venus claims that Cupid's wedding is not valid (*Met.* 6.9):

⁹⁹ *Met.* 6.9.5f. with Kenney (1990a: ad loc.): 'a proper bourgeois exception to informalities which, though not actually illegal, might in certain circumstances invalidate a marriage.' (p. 203).

¹⁰⁰ Walsh (1970: 216).

¹⁰¹ Helm (1906: 160 n. 2).

¹⁰² Helm (1906: e.g. 156).

¹⁰³ Comic influence on Lucian is evident, e.g. in the *Dialogues of Courtesans*, where already the scholiast remarks on the influence of Menander: Oeri (1948: 67f.) with further (though very old) literature.

¹⁰⁴ On the consent of the *paterfamilias*: Treggiari (1991: 170–80).

'Et ecce' inquit [sc. Venus] 'nobis turgidi ventris sui lenocinio commovet commiserationem [...] impares enim nuptiae et praeterea in villa sine testibus et patre non consentiente factae legitimae non possunt videri ac per hoc spurius iste nascetur.'

('Just look at her', she said. 'With that appealing swelling in her belly, she makes me feel quite sorry for her. [...] for the wedding was not between a couple of equal status. Besides, it took place in a country house, without witnesses and without a father's consent, so it cannot be pronounced legal. The child will therefore be born a bastard.')

She certainly has not agreed, but it could be argued that at least Psyche's parents have, since they married her off to the monster on the rock. Since the identity of Cupid's father is dubious,¹⁰⁵ Venus usurps this right, although her consent as *materfamilias* is not necessary, but only 'desirable'.¹⁰⁶ She is right, however, in her statement about unequal marriage. In Roman law, marriages between freeborn citizens and prostitutes, and between senators and 'women of low origins or professional connections' were forbidden.¹⁰⁷ In mixed marriages, 'when the mother was a foreigner and the father Roman and there was no *conubium* between them, the child followed the mother by *ius gentium*.'¹⁰⁸

Slightly different arrangements are valid for Greek (or rather Athenian) law. In order to have a valid marriage and not a concubinage, both husband and wife have to be citizens of the same *polis*; only then are their children citizens, too. Apparently it does not matter whether the child is born before or after the actual marriage; at least in comedy the birth of a child before the marriage feast does not prevent it from having citizen status.

Venus' statement is clear as regards Roman law: she calls it *lenocinium*,¹⁰⁹ which indicates her view that Psyche is a mere prostitute. This is however wishful thinking, since she knows that Psyche is freeborn and a king's daughter.¹¹⁰ More important might be the notion of Psyche being a foreigner, which is undesirable for marriage under both Roman and Greek law. Indeed, the notion of foreign girls being recognized as citizens of the same *polis* as the

¹⁰⁵ Kenney (1990a: ad 5.29.6).

¹⁰⁶ Treggiari (1991: 178) 'It was also desirable that a son's choice of wife should please his mother.'

¹⁰⁷ Treggiari (1991: 43–9), this quotation p. 44. Cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 430), who argue that a Roman man may marry a Roman woman, regardless of their social status, and point out that Apuleius is not using technical terminology here. Cupid, though, as a god, is not of the same status as Psyche, who is mortal.

¹⁰⁸ Treggiari (1991: 45).

¹⁰⁹ Lit. 'blandishment', but etymologically related to *leno*, cf. *OLD* s.v., and Zimmerman et al. (2004: 429). For the sentiment cf. also *scortatu Met.* 5.28.

¹¹⁰ *Met.* 6.8.2 'fugitivam regis filiam, Veneris ancillam' ('the runaway daughter of the king, the maidservant of Venus').

young man they love constitutes a stock scene of Greek comedy that also has its equivalent on the Roman stage.¹¹¹

Psyche is brought to a foreign country from her parents' house, where she is a princess. She leaves her social status as a freeborn citizen when she is to be united with the invisible stranger in his house. Since the story's setting at the beginning is expressly Greek, as the narrator reminds his readers again before he tells the oracle which sets the story in motion,¹¹² Psyche leaves her citizen status behind her, becoming a foreigner in Cupid's social environment. She is united in something which is not quite marriage with a man whose house is not in her own *polis*. This in Greek law turns her into a woman with no citizen rights, including the right of lawful marriage, and in Roman law, too, this *peregrina* status as a foreigner would cause her problems of *conubium* (marriage). Such is the state of many of the courtesans in comedy. These girls are usually either still innocent, in love with the young man though they have not yet begun sexual relations with him (for example *Poenulus*, *Rudens*), or are faithful to the young lover, who is their first and only love anyway (for example *Cistellaria*), so that their true love can be sanctified and rewarded through recognition and marriage to their lover.

Psyche takes over exactly this role, being a stranger in Cupid's country, and forming a marriage-like tie with him. This relationship between a *meretrix* and her lover can take on a marriage-like form (as for example in Menander's *Samia*), but is sometimes sanctified belatedly by the girl's recognition as a citizen girl, which raises her from her non-citizen status to that of the daughter of a citizen of the same town as the young man's (*Perikeiromene*). Wehrli states that the girl's recognition as a citizen is introduced into the plot to give her a just reward for her constancy in love and to satisfy the audience's desire for justice.¹¹³ Thus it can be argued that Psyche fulfils these requirements: she is faithful to Cupid and he is her only lover, and deification is her just reward. As a citizen from a foreign country, and as a princess of it, she is of the highest rank to which a human being can aspire. But being a foreigner she has no rights in Cupid's Olympian family. Only her 'recognition' through Jupiter raises her to citizen status and sanctifies the marriage of equals.

It has been stated that Psyche's raising into the ranks of the gods through Jupiter by giving her a cup of immortal ambrosia to drink replaces the function of the recognition scene in ensuring the marriage of equals:¹¹⁴ '[Jupiter speaking] Iam faxo nuptias non impares sed legitimas et iure civili

¹¹¹ Cupid certainly sees their first union as a marriage, since he uses the Roman divorce formula on Psyche (*Met.* 5.26), but in language influenced by comedy; cf. Ch. 2.6 above.

¹¹² *Met.* 4.32.6. ¹¹³ Wehrli (1936); Neumann (1958).

¹¹⁴ Frangoulidis (1997: 146).

congruas' ('I shall declare the union lawful and in keeping with the civil law, and not one between persons of differing social status'; *Met.* 6.23.4). The deification meets the legal requirements of both societies, the Roman one by the recognition through the *paterfamilias*, and especially the Greek one by the 'recognition' of Psyche as a citizen of Olympus just as her husband is. Psyche in her second marriage stops being a concubine and enters a proper marriage.

Konstan, who stresses the differences between New Comedy and the (Greek) novel, points out that:

In New Comedy, a citizen girl does not choose a husband; she is given in marriage, and the whole business is arranged by her father or guardian and the family of the boy. The young man may have been initially attracted to her in an erotic way.¹¹⁵

This is, in a way, exactly what happens in the story of *Cupid and Psyche*: compelled by the oracle, the father gives his daughter to an unknown 'husband', and Psyche only falls in love with Cupid long after her (first) wedding. It is Cupid who desires Psyche from the first moment he sees her, and wounds himself with his arrow so as to fall in love with her. Naturally, his family is initially against the union, as Venus clearly states, and her family never knows of the details of the match. There are differences, but the essential theme, the inequality of the couple, which is then amended by Psyche's assumption into 'citizen'—or rather divine—status, is similar. Thus their marriage is legal and their offspring, born in legal wedlock, naturally shares their divine citizenship,¹¹⁶ at least in a Greek context.

Many comedies end with the wedding of the couple after the girl's recognition. The end of Cupid's comedy is of course his wedding, and on that occasion Jupiter reminds us of the genre again (*Met.* 6.23):

Sat est cotidianis eum [sc. Cupidinem] *fabulis* ob adulteria cunctasque corruptelas infamatum. Tollenda est omnis occasio et luxuria puerilis nuptialibus pedicis alliganda. *Puellam elegit et virginitate privavit: teneat, possideat*, amplexus Psychen semper suis amoribus perfruatur.

(He has been the subject of enough notoriety in day-to-day *fabulae* on account of his adulteries and all manner of improprieties. We must deprive him of all opportunities; his juvenile behaviour must be shackled with the chains of marriage. *He has chosen the*

¹¹⁵ Konstan (1994: 150). He also stresses the 'absence of erotic symmetry that characterizes amatory forms prior to the novel' (p. 141); in his scheme Cupid and Psyche are asymmetric, and thus not a typical novel couple; but a parallel to the comic couple may be found.

¹¹⁶ Cf. James (1987: 142 with n. 13) for a different reading of this 'metamorphosis' of someone mortal into an immortal, but with a similar stress on Psyche's being Cupid's equal at their marriage.

girl, and robbed her of her virginity, so he must have and hold her. Let him take Psyche in his embrace and enjoy his dear one ever after.) (trans. adapted)

The repetition of the word *fabula* as well as the generic betrothal of a girl to her lover after he had taken her virginity as the background to their marriage are distinctly comic, and form an adequate closure to a story which, although taking elements from tragedy, finally settles down in a comic mode. Cf. Ter. *Ad.* 686: 'MICIO virginem vitiasti quam te non ius fuerat tangere' ('you seduced a girl that you had no right to touch') and l. 734f. 'iam virginem | despondi; res compositast; fiunt nuptiae' ('I have already arranged the engagement of the girl. Everything is settled, the marriage is taking place').¹¹⁷

Jupiter's agreement and the presence of all the gods ensure that this time the wedding is legitimate and final. Scholars who want to read the second marriage as a *hieros gamos* have not taken into account that at that time Psyche is heavily pregnant, which has no counterpart in the *hieros gamos* imagery of mystery religions;¹¹⁸ pregnant brides are a feature of comedy. In the *Amphitruo* too, Alcmena, though not strictly speaking a bride,¹¹⁹ is heavily pregnant throughout the play and gives birth at the end.

Psyche's Pregnancy

Psyche's pregnancy, once it is accepted that the 'first' marriage between *Cupid and Psyche* is not quite legal, may then be another comic reference. Psyche then resembles the young woman—always a citizen girl—in comedy, who conceives a child out of wedlock and is finally married to the young man shortly before or after the birth of the child. These women are freeborn citizens, but usually of a lower social status than the young man (*Adelphoe*, *Aulularia*), and are accepted into the higher-class family by the young man's father at the end of the comedy.

Apuleius is rather reticent about Psyche's (first) wedding night (*Met.* 5.4).¹²⁰ It also bears no resemblance to comic weddings which usually happen at the end of the play, but more to the pre-dramatic 'rapes' of young girls by their future husbands.¹²¹ It is dark: Psyche fears for her virginity ('tunc

¹¹⁷ Zimmerman et al. (2004: 541f.) draws attention to the fact that raping virgins is usually punished severely in real Roman society, as opposed to the lenient attitude displayed in comedy.

¹¹⁸ Fehling (1977).

¹¹⁹ For a critical approach: Christenson (2000: 229); contrast Duckworth (1994: 256f.) for enthusiastic praise of her.

¹²⁰ This has been interpreted as classical and poetical restraint, cf. conveniently Zimmerman et al. (2004: 132 (with references)) for possible reasons.

¹²¹ Cf. Hoevels (1979: 74): 'Amor schläft mit Psyche also gegen ihren Willen; er vergewaltigt sie.' Cf. also May (2005) on multi-layered references to wedding imagery in Greek and Roman drama.

virginitati suae pro tanta solitudine metuens', 'since she was utterly alone, she trembled and shuddered in fear for her virginity') and cannot ascertain the identity of her 'husband' in the darkness, just like some of the girls raped in comedy, who do not recognize the face of their rapists when they see it, but need a recognition token. Psyche, like these girls in comedy, is wholly ignorant of the identity and appearance of her 'husband', and like the raped girls in, for example, Terence's *Adelphoe*, who start a proper and perhaps even loving relationship with their rapists, she only gets to know him better afterwards. Indeed, she only falls in love with him some way into their marriage, when she sees his beauty in her attempt to kill him, and pricks herself with an arrow taken from Cupid's quiver (*Met.* 5.23): 'Sic ignara Psyche sponte in Amoris incidit amorem' ('so all unknowing and without prompting Psyche fell in love with Love').

There is also the apparent haste with which 'iamque aderat ignobilis maritus et torum inscenderat et uxorem sibi Psychen fecerat et ante lucis exortum propere discesserat' ('But now her unknown husband arrived and climbed into the bed. He made Psyche his wife, and swiftly departed before dawn broke'; *Met.* 5.4.3.)—cf. Kenney's remark (1990a: ad loc.): 'a hurried and clandestine consummation, a hint perhaps of (what will later emerge) a guilty conscience'. Thus a second, lawful, wedding at the end of the tale corresponds to the legal wedding of the young girls in comedy to their 'seducers' at the end of the plays.¹²²

Voluptas

Venus' enemy Sobrietas (5.30) and her servant girls Consuetudo (6.8), Sollicitudo, and Tristities (both 6.9) are personified emotions, whose relations to other personifications in literature as well as the underlying non-serious nature of these abstractions have been pointed out by Paula James.¹²³ A similar collection of feelings are found in Amor's entourage in Plautus' *Mercator*.¹²⁴

Nam amorem haec cuncta vitia sectari solent,
cura, aegritudo, nimiaque elegantia

.
Sed amori accedunt etiam haec quae dixi minus:

¹²² According to Callebat (1968: 185), the use of *inscendere* with accusative, attested in Plautus (*Amph.* 450), is avoided by classical authors, but reprised by late authors.

¹²³ Cf. James (2000: 48f.) and James (2001: esp. 153) on the tragic and comic effect of personifications, and p. 167 n. 28 for further literature on Roman abstractions. Cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 426) for other abstracts in the *Metamorphoses* in relation to the pantomime performance in *Met.* 10.31, where Terror and Metus appear as companions of Minerva, and *ibid.* p. 553 on Voluptas.

¹²⁴ Plaut. *Merc.* 18f., 24–30.

insomnia, aerumna, error, [et] terror et fuga;
 ineptia, stultitiaque adeo et temeritast,
 incogitantia excors, inmodestia,
 petulantia et cupiditas, malivolentia;
 inerit etiam aviditas, desidia, iniuria,
 inopia, contumelia et dispendium,

(For all these sins usually follow love: care, illness, and exceeding refinement. [...]) But also these, which I have not mentioned before, go along with love: sleeplessness, trouble, error, fear and flight: folly, even stupidity and recklessness, senseless thoughtlessness, licentiousness, wantonness and desire, malevolence; there will also be covetousness, idleness, unlawful conduct, poverty, indignity, and expense.)

or as Charinus' 'company' later in the same play:¹²⁵

CHARINUS Quis me revocat? EUTYCHUS Spes, Salus, Victoria.
 CH. Quid me voltis? EU. Ire tecum. CH. Alium comitem quaerite,
 non admittunt hi me *comites* qui tenent. EU. Qui sunt ei?
 CH. Cura, miseria, aegritudo, lacrumae, lamentatio.

(CHARINUS Who calls me back?—EUTYCHUS hope, Safety, Victory.—CH. What do you all want from me?—EU. To go with you.—CH. Look for another companion, these *companions* who already hold me won't let me.—EU. Who are they?—CH. Care, Misery, Illness, Tears, Lamentation.)

Although there is no direct verbal reminiscence, it is the same type of personification: on the one hand, the happy emotions linked with love proper, on the other, their darker side, with *aegritudo* and *lamentatio* being of the same semantic field as Apuleius' *Tristities*. This last word, furthermore, is rare, and only occurs once more in classical Latin, again in comedy, in Ter. *Ad.* 267.¹²⁶

Consuetudo ('Habit'), or rather her Greek equivalent *συνήθεια*, occurs in a similar list of abstracts to whom the love-lost young man of the *Samia* feels himself enslaved through his girl—the similar image of 'Habit' binding the lover is striking:¹²⁷

καὶ μὴ τοσαῦτ' ἦν ἐμποδών, ὄρκος, πόθος,
 χρόνος, *συνήθει*, οἷς ἐδουλόμην ἐγώ,
 (and if there weren't so many obstacles—my oath,
 desire, time, our *relationship* (*synetheia*), all things
 which *fetter* me) (trans. Arnott)

¹²⁵ Merc. 867–70. Cf. also the passage in *Capt.* 864, where Ergasilus identifies himself with Jupiter and then with *Salus, Fortuna, Lux, Laetitia, Gaudium*, but not in an erotic context.

¹²⁶ According to PHI the only other instance of *tristities* in extant classical Latin outside Apuleius.

¹²⁷ Men. *Sam.* 624f.; cf. also Ter. *Hec.* 404 and Gomme and Sandbach (1973: ad loc.) for further parallels.

This is not altogether unlike Psyche's being treated as a slave by Venus and her handmaidens, who torture her (*Met.* 6.9.ff.). Consuetudo is also associated or even identified with marital love in Ter. *Andr.* 560.¹²⁸

This comic cluster of abstracts seems to be a commonplace in the *sermo amatorius* as seen in comedy, a genre which generally abounds in unusual abstract deities,¹²⁹ cf. for example the prologue deities, which include Help (Auxilium) or Misapprehension (Agnoia). It is possible that Apuleius got inspiration for his abstract servant maidens of the love-goddess Venus from the comic stereotype of these abstracts to whom the lover is enslaved, since it seems that these lists of personifications are especially linked to protestations of love and enslavement to the charms of the beloved in comedy.

Another cluster of personifications in relation to Love is found in Plautus' *Bacchides*, where young Pistoclerus invents ad hoc some deities who live in the house of his beloved:¹³⁰

PISTOCLERUS *Amor, Voluptas, Venu', Venustas, Gaudium,*
Iocu', Ludus, Sermo, Suavisaviatio.

LYD. quid tibi commerciest cum dis damnosissumis?

PIST. mali sunt homines qui bonis dicunt male;
tu dis nec recte dicis: non aequom facis.

LYD. an deus est ullus Suavisaviatio?

PIST. an non putasti esse umquam? o Lyde, es barbarus;

(PISTOCLERUS *Love, Pleasure, Venus, Grace, Joy, Jest, Game, Chitchat, Kissification.*—LYDUS What dealings do you have with these most damnable deities?—PIST. Bad are the people who speak badly of good things; you do not speak rightly of the gods. You are doing wrong.—LYD. Is there such a god as Kissification?—PIST. Did you think that there wasn't? Oh Lyde, you are a barbarian!)

This is the first instance in Latin literature of Voluptas as a personified goddess, and interestingly enough she is surrounded by Venus and Cupid in a list of traditional and ad hoc invented deities from comedy. Voluptas is a likely goddess to be joined in this family relationship to Venus and Cupid. She is also a personified deity: Lucretius 1.1 identifies her with Venus, and her association with love deities, is evident.¹³¹ Although Vergil, too,¹³² has a list of abstracts which in part overlaps with Plautus' deities, the link between

¹²⁸ 'Consuetudine et coniugio liberali devinctum'; ('bound by habit / love and marriage to a free born woman'); cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 169).

¹²⁹ Cf. also Ch. 8.4 above.

¹³⁰ *Bacch.* 115–21.

¹³¹ Kenney (1990a: ad loc.) and for further literature.

¹³² Verg. *Aen.* 6.274–80, cf. also Pease (1955: 697) for his imitators and predecessors; and Pöschl (1988).

love gods and abstract deities seems to occur first in *Bacchides*. It is much in line with Plautine comic writing to add abstract concepts to the Pantheon by personification. Plautus is here deriding this custom in Roman religion.¹³³

A similar list is found in Phoenicium's letter, that Pseudolus has to read out (*Pseud.* 64f., 69f.):

Nunc nostri amores, mores, *consuetudines*,
iocu', ludus, sermo, *suavisaviatio*,
harunc *voluptatum* mi omnium atque ibidem tibi
distractio, discidium, vastities venit.

(now our love and ways and *familiarities*, fun, game, talk, and *kissification* [...] from all these *pleasures* for me and you likewise the tearing, the cutting apart, the desolation has come.)

There is no personification in this passage, but again a similar list of emotions, including *consuetudines* and *voluptas*, is given together with some words of the *sermo amatorius*.

Interesting also in this context is Alcumena's monody from the *Amphitruo*, where *voluptas* occurs four times within nine verses,¹³⁴ one of which is a semi-personification, again with another abstract emotion (*maeror* ('sadness'), cf. *tristities*) as her companion:

ita di<vi>s est placitum, *voluptatem ut maeror comes* consequatur.¹³⁵

(thus it pleases the gods, that sadness follows pleasure as a companion.)

Plautus habitually associates love with these concepts, and sometimes even personifies them.

As to the child's sex in Apuleius, it is surprising that it turns out to be female, Voluptas. Kenney (1990a: ad 6.24.4) notes acutely: 'A. springs a surprise. We have been led to believe that the child would be a son (5.11.6, 5.12.5).'¹³⁶ He does not proceed to discuss this problem.

It seems that Apuleius wanted his readers to believe that the child would be male; this is not only because Cupid himself says so ('*infantem alium*' ('another child')); *Met.* 5.11.6.—Psyche shares this idea: 'in hoc saltem parvulo cognoscam faciem tuam', ('I hope to observe your features as reflected at least

¹³³ Barsby (1986: 106f.).

¹³⁴ Cf. *voluptatum* 633, *voluptatem* 635, *voluptas* 637, *voluptatis* 641.—See also Christenson (2000: 40f. and 251f.) for the sexual innuendo.

¹³⁵ *Amph.* 635. More abstracts, including *maeror*, in *Merc.* 846, 870, who there has as *comites cura, miseria* (Sorrow, Misery) etc.

¹³⁶ Kenney (1990a: 224).

in this our tiny child’); *Met.* 5.13), but also because there is the generic expectation from comedy that the child conceived out of wedlock and born sometimes before, sometimes during the *fabula* would be masculine.¹³⁷

Pease gives the little evidence there is for Voluptas as a deity, but with due scepticism.¹³⁸ Her Greek equivalent Hedone is not very common, either. She sometimes occurs in the myth of Herakles at the crossroads.¹³⁹ Both the Latin and the Greek goddess occur in philosophical systems, but the only other occurrence as a personification occurs in a dramatic context, namely in the satyr play by Sophocles, *Krisis*, on the Judgement of Paris.¹⁴⁰ Athenaeus. (15.687c) states that in this play Aphrodite appears as a kind of Hedone: ‘Σοφοκλῆς δ’ ὁ ποιητὴς ἐν Κρίσει τῷ δράματι τὴν μὲν Ἀφροδίτην Ἡδονὴν τινα οὔσαν δαίμονα [...] παράγει.’

This shows that Sophocles’ drama identified Aphrodite and Hedone. In Apuleius she is however a different entity, though related to Venus as her granddaughter, which distinguishes her from the Lucretian and Sophoclean approach and aligns her with the literary tradition found in Plautus. To trace her back to Plautus also suits the Apuleian playfulness in this particular context. Voluptas occurs in several lists of divinities related to Love in the mentioned passages in Plautus only, and is thus an obvious comic child for Apuleius. Thus, though surprising, it is not incongruous with the story that Cupid’s offspring is atypically and unexpectedly female. Apuleius’ personifications and games have a forerunner in comedy, and since the tale ends with her name—‘filia, quam Voluptatem nominamus’ (‘a daughter [...] We call her Pleasure’; *Met.* 6.24.4), the story which began with aspects of tragedy ends with a comic marriage and the birth of its child, a comic abstraction and a metatheatrical reference.

In Plato *comicus* 188 K.—A ll. 10–21, Aphrodite, herself apparently drunk, will display the rejuvenated Phaon only if the frenzied women who want to see him will bring her (meaningless and funny) offerings. More relevantly,

¹³⁷ Cf. Fantham (1975: 59) for the babies being ‘always gratifyingly male’.

¹³⁸ (1955) in his commentary ad. Cic. *Nat. Deor.* 2.61: ‘the degree of personification is not clear in all these cases.’ The altars and places of worship he lists are actually for Volupia which he claims to be identical. On her further cf. R. Peter in Roscher iii.1 (1890–94) s.v. ‘Indigamenta’ (p. 233); Hoefels (1979: 227 with n. 247), who lists some allegorical personifications in addition to Plaut. *Bac.* 115, which he indicates is ‘scherzhaft’.

¹³⁹ Prodikos (D.–K. 84B2, 26–33) has Arete and Kakia, Max. Tyr. 14.1, Justin *Apol.* 2.2, D.L. 2.65, Ath. 12.510c have Arete and Hedone; the latter is used by Silen 15.18–128 who has Scipio choose between Virtus and Voluptas. Cf. *LIMC* IV 1, 468–72 s.v. ‘Hedone’ (Rainer Vollkommer), esp. p. 469. Vollkommer also stresses that no undisputable portrait of Hedone has been found in ancient art (p. 472). For unpersonified *hedone* being discussed in relation to comedy cf. Pl., *Phlb.* 47b–50e.

¹⁴⁰ Fragments in *TrGF* IV. 360–1 Radt.

several of the offerings are not to go to her, but to other, new (Orthannes, Konisalos, both gods sharing certain attributes with Priapus) or non-existent gods (Lordon, Kybdasos, and the heros Keles). The second group of 'gods' are derived from words with obscene meanings and are ad hoc creations.¹⁴¹ It is a recurring topic in comedy to deride the integration of new gods into Olympus, and this play with the abstract personifications is an anticipation both of the playful use Plautus makes of this comic tradition and of Apuleius' adaptation of it in Venus' serving girls and the introduction of the new goddesses Psyche and Voluptas.

Venus

Venus is a curious mixture of several concepts. Kenney analysed her mixed character as consisting of elements of Venus Caelestis and Venus Vulgaris,¹⁴² but there are some other elements in her character, which may be linked with comedy.¹⁴³ This becomes evident rather suddenly after Cupid has left Psyche and the girl is searching the earth, and the focus is turned back to Venus, who is still cavorting in the sea. (*Met.* 5.28ff.). After the seagull informs her of Cupid's amours, Venus changes very quickly from the vengeful (epic or tragic) deity of the beginning to something very different: she emerges as a very human Roman matron,¹⁴⁴ engaged in some rather undignified and loud shouting, cf. *Met.* 5.28 'exclamavit vel maxime' ('bawled out at the top of her voice').¹⁴⁵ She is displeased with her son for having a mistress, and is also very keen on not appearing as a *lena* who procured Psyche for her son as a mistress; since she does not see their marriage as legitimate, she has a point there. Those two aspects, that of the irate and stern matron and the procuress, will have to be analysed in detail, since they occur in the same speech, but interrupted by a reply from the seagull:

¹⁴¹ All the 'names' indicate sexual positions: perhaps 'Bender', 'Stooper', and 'Rider'. Cf. also Casolari (2000: 95); Henderson (1991: 127, 164f., 178ff.).

¹⁴² Kenney (1990a: 20), (1990b).

¹⁴³ Kenney (1990a: ad 5.28.9): 'In this and the following scene Venus sounds more like a matron in comedy or mime than an Olympian goddess.'

¹⁴⁴ Grimal (1976: 24): 'une matrone romaine, procédurière, toujours prête à faire valoir son droit, cruelle avec ses servantes, redoutable dans ses rapports avec ses «amies» et ses parentes, qui redoutent de se brouiller avec elle. Tout cet aspect du conte présente un «couleur» typiquement romaine.'

¹⁴⁵ On the theatrical aspect of this phrase cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 332 with further references). Cf. also *Met.* 5.29 *boans* ('bellowing'; adapted) with Zimmerman et al. (2004: 333f.), and *ibid.* p. 371 on *Met.* 6.2 *longum exclamat* ('she cried out from afar' for comic intertexts).

At Venus irata solidum exclamat repente: 'Ergo iam ille bonus filius meus habet amicam aliquam? Prome agetum, quae sola mihi servis amanter, nomen eius quae puerum ingenuum et investem sollicitavit.' (*Met.* 5.28.7)

(Venus was absolutely livid. She burst out: 'So now that fine son of mine has a girl friend, has he? Come on, then, tell me her name, since you are the only one who serves me with affection. Who is it who has tempted my innocent, beardless boy?')

Nec loquax illa conticuit avis, sed 'nescio,' inquit 'domina: puto puellam—si probe memini, Psyche nomine dicitur—efflicte cupere.' Tunc indignata Venus exclamavit vel maxime: 'Psychen ille meae formae succubam, mei nominis aemulam vere diligit? Nimirum illud incrementum lenam me putavit cuius monstratu puellam illam cognosceret.' (*Met.* 5.28.8.f.).

(The garrulous bird did not withhold a reply. She said: 'I do not know, mistress; I think the story goes that he is head over heels in love with a girl by the name of Psyche if my memory serves me rightly.' Then Venus in rage bawled out at the top of her voice: 'Can it really be true that he is in love with that Psyche who lays claim to my beauty and pretends to my name? That son of mine must surely have regarded me as a procuress, when I pointed the girl out to him so that he could win her acquaintance.')

Venus the stern parent (*dura/irata*)

It is mainly the aspect of Venus that Kenney terms *Venus Vulgaris* which is under consideration here. Venus takes on some functions of the *senex iratus* ('angry old man'). This perhaps explains her stress on her age and fading beauty, and she is explicitly called *irata* ('angry').

In the first part of her speech at *Met.* 5.28 she stresses her anger. She has sole responsibility for Cupid, a role in comedy reserved for stern fathers, who want to prevent their sons having contact with prostitutes. Since Venus fears that Psyche is far below Cupid's status (in addition to being very jealous herself), she wants to separate him from Psyche, his unsuitable girlfriend. She is *irata* because Cupid in her opinion is still too young, a *puer ingenuus et investis* ('my innocent, beardless boy'), and not an *adulescens* yet.¹⁴⁶ Venus tries something similar to the father of Charinus, who removes his son who is barely of age from the *meretrix* he has fallen in love with.¹⁴⁷ Demipho, the *senex* of the *Mercator*, wants his son to sober up and lose his love for the girl by making him go on a sea voyage as a merchant.—The language Venus uses in due course to her son is Plautine.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Kenney (1990a: ad loc.): 'comic exaggeration by an over-protective mother.'

¹⁴⁷ *Merc.* 40–2.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 337) on *Met.* 5.29 *inamabilis* or *velim...scias*, or *Met.* 5.30 *parricida*.

Like a character in comedy, she only needs to step out of her door¹⁴⁹ to encounter her matronly neighbours, in her case—other goddesses: ‘Sic effata foras sese proripit infesta et stomachata biles Venerias’ (‘These were her words. Then she bustled out, glowering and incensed with passionate rage’; *Met.* 5.31). Venus is accused by Ceres and Juno of a double standard when her own house is concerned: 5.31 ‘cum tuae domus amores amare coherceas’ (‘when you sourly refuse to allow love-liaisons in your own house’), which may possibly recall Plaut. *Cist.* 68 ‘an amare occipere amarumst?’ (‘is it bitter to engage in love?’)¹⁵⁰ Venus and the parent generation in comedy share some similarities: both try to keep their offspring from pernicious encounters with unsuitable girls. Their intentions are however very different: Venus is comically afraid of being called the mother of a grown-up child, whilst the fathers of comedy are more concerned with their sons spending too much money on these unsuitable girls.

Venus *lena*

It is in Venus’ company that for the first time Cupid’s relationship with Psyche is called anything other than marriage. The seagull who informs her of Cupid’s trespassing calls their relationship *montano scortatu* (‘Cupid was relaxing with a lady of easy virtue in the mountains’; *Met.* 5.28.4), and this sets the scene for Venus’ outbreak. The unequal marriage in the countryside and without witnesses is, as already argued, indeed not strictly valid in Roman law,¹⁵¹ but before the seagull calls it *scortatus* the thought of Psyche’s and Cupid’s social unsuitability has never occurred. Accordingly, once that idea has been planted in Venus’ mind, she elaborates upon it (*Met.* 5.28.9): ‘lenam me putavit cuius monstratu puellam illam cognosceret?’ (‘That son of mine must surely have regarded me as a procuress, when I pointed the girl out to him so that he could win her acquaintance.’).

Although she denies it, she brings up the idea of herself being a *lena*, a procuress, for her son.¹⁵² Scholars usually refer to elegy as the literary antecedent of this idea,¹⁵³ but it ultimately derives from comedy. Ovid acknowledges the origins of the *lena* characterization as comic, for example when he lists her as a type in *Am.* 1.15.17f.:

¹⁴⁹ More than half the instances of *foras* on the PHI CD-ROM are comic.

¹⁵⁰ Callebat (1968: 471). *Amare* once is an adverb, and once an infinitive, but the pun is a commonplace in comedy, cf. Ch. 7.3 above.

¹⁵¹ On *scortatu*, an Apuleian *hapax legomenon*, cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 327).

¹⁵² On *lenae* in comedy and elegy: Myers (1996).

¹⁵³ Harrison (1998: 54f.); Zimmerman et al. (2004: 332) also lists the comic intertexts.

Dum fallax servus, durus pater, improba lena,
vivent et meretrix blanda, Menandros erit.

(As long as the cunning slave, the harsh father, the shameless procuress and the charming courtesan will live, Menander will exist.)

She appears frequently in New Comedy,¹⁵⁴ and already in Old Comedy.¹⁵⁵ In Plato's *Phaon* it is even Venus who plays the role of the *lena*.¹⁵⁶ Plato (*comicus*) is a writer between Old and Middle Comedy; his texts involve both mythological parody, associated with the former, and the stock types associated with the latter. Especially from the perspective of mythological parody and the discussion of which kind of comedy might have dealt with gods acting in a human way, *Phaon's* testimony is illuminating: the portrait of Venus as a *lena* is a characterization Apuleius could have found in Middle Comedy or burlesque.

Most of our extant New Comedy *lenae* occur in Plautus.¹⁵⁷ In the *Asinaria*, Cleareta proves not only that her stock type is very popular in comedy, but also that she is naturally opposed to young lovers (*Asin.* 173ff.):

ARGYRIPPUS male agis mecum. CLEARETA quid me accusas, si facio officium
meum?
nam neque fictum usquam est neque pictum neque scriptum in poematis,
ubi lena bene agat cum quicumque amante quae frugi esse volt.

(ARGYRIPPUS You treat me badly.—CLEARETA Why do you accuse me, if I do my duty? For there is nowhere in fiction or painting or written in poems, where a procuress who wants to do a decent job treats any lover well.)

Other Plautine *lenae* are for example the comparatively respectable Melainis and the redoubtable 'Syra' in the *Cistellaria*, who is 'multiloqua et multibiba' ('talking much and drinking much'; l. 149). Philocomasium's mother was an old *lena* (*Mil.* 106ff.), and the *ancillae* Astaphium (*Truculentus*) and Scapha (*Mostellaria*) show some *lena*-features.

It is remarkable that it is Venus and 'the only slave who is faithful to her' who bring up the issue of the marriage not being legal, and turn Psyche in the reader's eyes into a *meretrix*, with Venus herself as the procuress, and start a completely different set of literary allusions. With Psyche's fall from the status of a princess married to an unknown husband, and Venus' move from being the 'orbis totius alma Venus' ('Venus that tends the entire world'; *Met.* 4.30.1)

¹⁵⁴ Oeri (1948: 50–3).

¹⁵⁵ Oeri (1948: 26, 50ff.).

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Oeri (1948: 27) for the older literature. On *Phaon* cf. Casolari (2000).

¹⁵⁷ Greek examples are rarer, but cf. e.g. Epikrates fr. 9; Theophrilos fr. 11.

to the character of an abusive scold, the lofty level of tragedy is firmly left behind. Especially when Venus' speech is analysed in detail for comic references, it becomes clear that Roman comedy was in Apuleius' mind when he developed this particular scene, and the two speeches by Venus, interrupted by the seagull, *Met.* 4.28.7 and 9, take on a different comic characteristic.

The comedy aspect is built up even further in the following scene, Venus' accusation of Cupid to his face (*Met.* 5.29.2–30.6), the comic aspects and verbal reminiscences of which have already been analysed above in connection with Cupid's characterization. In her scene with the other two goddesses Ceres and Juno she again behaves in a similarly undignified way (*Met.* 5.31). It is here that she refers to the '*domus meae famosa fabula*' ('the scandalous *fabula* concerning my household'; *Met.* 5.31.2, trans. adapted), which in the context of her seeing her son as a secret lover of a slave girl and herself as his *lena* can only mean comedy, because of the stock characterization behind it. Furthermore, the reference to *famosa fabula* might imply 'metatheatre', an awareness that she is a character within a story. The advice the two goddesses give her is equally comic:

Quod autem, oramus, isti crimen si puellae lepidae libenter adrisit? An ignoras eum masculum et iuvenem esse vel certe iam quot sit annorum oblita es? (*Met.* 5.31.4).

(What harm is there, we should like to know, in his giving the glad eye to a nicely turned-out girl? Don't you realize that he is in the prime of manhood, or are you forgetting his age?)

This is reminiscent of the attitude of a *senex lepidus* or *mitis* (a 'charming' or 'kindly old man') from comedy, and indeed Kenney (1990a: ad loc.) compares the lenient Micio's relaxed attitude to the goings-on of his nephew and adopted son Aeschinus in Terence's *Adelphoe* (50–76).¹⁵⁸ Venus, previously compared to the strict parent of comedy, here finds her match in her female contemporaries who are themselves *mites* and forgiving of the peccadilloes of the young. At the end of the scene, Venus is 'indignata ridicule tractari suas iniurias' ('affronted that the insults which she sustained were treated so lightly'; *Met.* 5.31). The phrase *ridicule tractare*, as Zimmerman et al. (2004: 360) argue, like its Greek counterpart *κωμῳδεῖν* may also imply 'to make comedy', allowing the scene and the book to end on a distinct comic note.

Venus' un-godly behaviour is finally cemented, when she promises to give out French kisses to any informer on her runaway slave Psyche at the *metae Murtiae* (*Met.* 6.8.2), a well-known pick-up place for prostitutes in

¹⁵⁸ For a theatrical analysis of the two goddesses cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 350), with further references, and *ibid.* p. 357 on the familiar address of Venus as *mulier* in *Met.* 5.34.

Rome¹⁵⁹ as well as another break in the illusion of a Greek setting, which, as we have seen, is a Plautine metatheatrical element.

Taking into account that Venus as well as Ceres and Juno take over comic roles usually reserved for male *senes*, this scene is unusual. It must be remembered, however, that Venus takes this role on herself because Cupid's paternity is a problematic issue, and no doubt Apuleius plays with the comic stock types here. It is evident that as soon as he introduces Venus' tirades against her son, the tragic level of the story is left behind for a more bourgeois and comic one.

Jupiter

It is too short-sighted to see in Jupiter only the Euripidean *deus ex machina*. It is more feasible to see him as another benevolent father figure from comedy,¹⁶⁰ and, with Grimal,¹⁶¹ as the paratragic Jupiter of the *Amphitruo*, who combines tragic and comic elements:¹⁶²

mirari nolim vos, quapropter Iuppiter
nunc histriones curet; ne miremini:
ipse hanc acturust Iuppiter comoediam.
quid? Admiratin estis? Quasi vero novom
nunc proferatur Iovem facere histrioniam:
etiam, histriones anno quom in proscaenio hic
Iovem invocarunt, venit, auxilio is fuit.
praeterea certo prodit in tragoedia.
hanc fabulam, inquam, hic Iuppiter hodie ipse aget
et ego una cum illo.

(I would not wish you to wonder why Jupiter now looks after actors: do not wonder. Jupiter himself will act in this comedy. Well, when the actors last year on this stage called out to Jupiter, he came, and helped them. Furthermore he stepped forth in a tragedy for sure. This play, I say, Jupiter will today act himself, and me along with him.)

There is a slight difference, since in the *Amphitruo* Plautus introduces Jupiter as a character within the play instead of his appearing only as a *deus ex machina* at the end as in Apuleius, but the discrepancy is mitigated by the way Apuleius represents Jupiter's granting Cupid his help, as it were, on the

¹⁵⁹ References in Kenney (1990a: ad loc.). The phrase used for the kisses themselves, *savia suavia*, might be inspired by comedy too, cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 418).

¹⁶⁰ Cf. e.g. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 534).

¹⁶¹ Cf. n. 70 above.

¹⁶² *Amph.* 86–95, Mercury's prologue.

Olympian stage, with a direct speech (*Met.* 6.22.3–5). A comic reference there is Cupid's description: 'Cupido [...] ad armillum redit' ('Cupido [...] reverted to his former role'; *Met.* 6.22.1). The phrase is ultimately derived from the comic drunken old woman who narrates the tale,¹⁶³ and so his immediate request for Jupiter's help cannot be taken as a tragic plea for a god's help (since there is no other way out of the situation), but rather as a comic allusion.

On the Roman stage, Jupiter does not appear very often, but the year before the performance of Plautus' *Amphitruo* he seems to have occurred as a *deus ex machina* in a tragedy,¹⁶⁴ so that Plautus' audience still remembered him. Apuleius brings Jupiter on stage, well aware that Jupiter himself as a *deus ex machina* is rare, and thus reminds his readers of the tragicomic nature of the *Amphitruo* as well as of the *Cupid and Psyche* tale. Apuleius, in forming a tragicomedy with elements of tragedy and comedy standing alongside each other, must have taken inspiration from Plautus' procedure.

Psyche's sisters

Whilst Cupid shows primarily comic features and Psyche develops from a tragic victim to a comic heroine, Venus changes from being the persecuting deity of tragedy to being the stern parent of comedy. A similar development¹⁶⁵ through the two dramatic genres can arguably be observed in Psyche's sisters.¹⁶⁶

At the beginning of the tale, they are only mentioned as relatively pretty and already married (*Met.* 4.28.1) to royal suitors.¹⁶⁷ After Psyche's alleged 'funeral', they return home to their parents, 'maestae atque lugubres deserto lare certatim ad parentum suorum conspectum adfatumque perrexerant' ('in their sadness and grief they vied with each other in hastily leaving home and making straight for their parents, to see them and discuss the matter with them'; *Met.* 5.4.6), with *certatim* only hinting at their future lack of loyalty to each other, their parents and their sister. This mourning for Psyche is also described in Cupid's direct speech, when he indicates that the

¹⁶³ Cf. Kenney (1990a: ad loc.). *OLD* s.v., cf. Ch. 10.6 below. The word *armillum* is archaic, cf. Callebat (1968: 478), but is itself not found in Plautus or Terence.

¹⁶⁴ Christenson (2000: 156).—On tragic epiphany cf. Barrett (1964) on *E. Hipp.* 1283.

¹⁶⁵ Frangoulidis (1994) attempts to align Venus and the sisters, but for other reasons.

¹⁶⁶ In addition to a Vergilian intertext to the Sacking of Troy, cf. e.g. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 263, with further references).

¹⁶⁷ *Met.* 4.32.3: 'procis regibus desponsae iam beatas nuptias adeptae' ('for some time now her two elder sisters had been betrothed to royal suitors and had contracted splendid marriages').

sisters believe Psyche to be dead: ‘sorores iam tuae mortis opinione turbatae tuumque vestigium requirentes scopulum istum protinus aderunt, quarum si quas forte lamentationes acceperis’ (‘your sisters are worried at the rumour that you are dead, and presently they will come to this rock to search for traces of you. Should you chance to hear their cries of grief?’; *Met.* 5.5).

At first the sisters show their concern and search, instead of the parents, for their lost sister, and indeed mourn her as if she were dead (*Met.* 5.7). Their first reunion with Psyche is joyful, but after they realize that Psyche is married to a god, all of a sudden envy strikes them and they turn into the vicious beasts of which Cupid had warned Psyche.¹⁶⁸ From that moment on, comic aspects are added to their characterization. Their language becomes comic;¹⁶⁹ their marriages are comic (*Met.* 5.9 and 10). The first sister is worried about the age and suspicious temper of her husband (‘patre meo seniore[m] maritum’, ‘I have a husband older than my father’). He is ‘cucurbita calviore[m] et quovis puero pusilliore[m]’, (‘balder than a pumpkin as well, and he hasn’t the virility of an infant’; trans. adapted), which carries some comic allusions as well as exaggerations.¹⁷⁰

The second one complains that she is ‘nec uxoris officiosam faciem sed medicae laboriosam personam sustinens’ (‘I am acting the part of a slaving nursing attendant, not of a dutiful wife’; *Met.* 5.10.2, trans. adapted). Both descriptions are comic in their exaggeration. Even if a sick-nurse is not a comic role, she nevertheless perceives it as a role, as the reference to *persona* implies.¹⁷¹ Unhappy marriages and wives complaining about their husbands (usually *senes*) are common in comedy.¹⁷² Amongst other things they complain about neglect, though admittedly not in the graphic terms of the sisters, mourning their elderly husbands’ decrepitude.

They decide to maintain the pretence of Psyche’s death, even to their parents, and are decried as ‘parricidium struentes contra sororem insontem’ (‘planning...the assassination of their innocent sister’; *Met.* 5.11.2), a warning that Cupid utters too: ‘iam mucrone dstricto iugulum tuum nefariae tuae sorores petunt’ (‘your impious sisters have drawn their swords,

¹⁶⁸ Cf. *Met.* 5.8.2 *invidiam* (‘envy’).

¹⁶⁹ Cf., for example, *Met.* 5.9: ‘En orba et saeva et iniqua Fortuna! Hocine tibi complacuit, ut utroque parente prognatae diversam sortem sustineremus?’ (‘Fortune, how blind and harsh and unjust you are! Was it your pleasure that we, daughters of the same parents, should endure so different a fate?’)—both *hocine* and *complacuit* are archaisms primarily found in comedy; cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 165).

¹⁷⁰ On *cucurbita* cf. Ch. 6.5 above, for the second phrase cf. e.g. Plaut. *Stich.* 176: ‘iam a pusillo puero ridiculus fui’ (‘even since I was a tiny little boy I have been funny’).

¹⁷¹ Cf. Ch. 5.3 above.

¹⁷² Duckworth (1994: 283 with n. 19) lists *Amph.* 882ff., *Cas.* 185ff., *Men.* 559ff., *Merc.* 700ff., *Phorm.* 1009ff., *Hec.* 274ff.

and are aiming for your jugular'; *Met.* 5.12.4). Murder within the family is a tragic theme, and their weapon is to induce Psyche to take the forbidden glance at a deity, which for example killed Semele. Cupid warns Psyche of this behaviour; in this context, the climax 'domum maritum teque' ('your house . . . , your husband, your person'; *Met.* 5.12.5) conveys the tragic stress on the downfall of the house. Both the narrator and Cupid refer to them repeatedly as dangerous creatures, for example Sirens, Lamiae,¹⁷³ and Furies: 'iam pestes illae taeterrimaeque Furiae anhelantes vipereum virus et festinantes impia celeritate navigabant' ('But now those baneful, most abhorrent Furies were hastening on their impious way aboard ship, exhaling their snakelike poison'; *Met.* 5.12.3).

These descriptions are basically epic and dramatic, but undermined in the following description by the use of comic vocabulary to illustrate their machinations. In describing their final attack on Psyche, Apuleius employs several military metaphors. The exaggerated use of such metaphors is characteristic of Plautus. Panayotakis¹⁷⁴ points out that, besides Vergilian reminiscences in the sisters' attacks,¹⁷⁵ the Plautine vocabulary for trickery and deception, often employed in connection with a cunning slave tricking an old man, is in Apuleius' mind. Both linguistic and thematic parallels can be found: for example 'complexaeque praedam suam sororis nomen emetientes *thensaurumque* penitus abditae *fraudis*' ('counterfeiting the name of sisters they embraced their prey. With joyful expressions they cloaked the deeply hidden deceit which they treasured within them'; *Met.* 5.14.3) recalls Plaut. *Merc.* 163 'tu quidem *thensaurum* huc mihi adportavisti *malī*? ('but you brought me here a treasure of evil') and 641 '*thensaurum* nescioquem memoras *malī*? ('you recall a certain treasure of evil').¹⁷⁶ Apuleius blends Vergilian epic and Plautine comedy in an elaborate manner through which he masterly retains both the dramatic atmosphere of the epic account and the dominant comic elements of trickery and deception.¹⁷⁷

A final direct speech by one of the sisters plays again with the comic sphere in an essentially dramatic context. She complains: "Certe si divini puelli (quod absit) haec mater audierit, statim me laqueo nexili suspendam." ("Be sure of this, that if she becomes a celebrity as the mother of a

¹⁷³ *Met.* 5.11f.; on married women as metaphorical Lamiae cf. Menander, *Plokion* fr. 403.

¹⁷⁴ On the constant use of military metaphors for the sisters: Panayotakis (1998: esp. 156ff.) for some of the following arguments, and Zimmerman et al. (2004: 210f.).

¹⁷⁵ Vergilian echoes: Harrison (1988: 266).

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Panayotakis (1998: 157) also for further examples (he also compares Plaut. *Epid.* 381 'cum praeda in castra redeo' ('I return into the camp with my prey'), Callebat (1968: 483); Grimal (1976) and Kenney (1990a) ad loc.

¹⁷⁷ Panayotakis (1998: 158).

divine child—which God forbid—I’ll pull a rope round my neck and hang myself”’; *Met.* 5.16.4). Hanging herself is one of the usual tragic deaths for a woman, like Phaedra.¹⁷⁸ But it is also rather comic here, because it is not the only way out of a tragic situation, but an exaggerated expression of envy as to Psyche’s pregnancy. It is also a favourite way to contemplate suicide in the rhetorical exaggeration of comedy.¹⁷⁹ At *Aul.* 76ff. Staphyla, afraid of her master’s discovery of his daughter’s pregnancy, sees only one way out:

neque quicquam meliust mihi,
ut opinor, quam ex me ut unam faciam litteram
†longum, laqueo† collum quando obstrinxero.

(and there is nothing better for me to do, I think, than to turn my neck into one long letter when I have tied my neck with a rope.)

Needless to say, suicides do not occur in comedy, and it is equally certain that the sister is not really contemplating killing herself. By using an expression which gives a possible tragic meaning, but is more easily associated with comic empty threats, Apuleius manages to keep up the suspense about the fate of all three sisters. The intrigues of the older ones are perfectly arranged, and the comic intertext allows us to presume that they will be successful, as comic intrigues usually are, which enhances the seriousness of their threats. Indeed, their intrigue succeeds in separating Cupid and Psyche, but still the sisters meet a tragic end, punished for their envy, despite all comic and farcical exaggeration. The sisters are undoubtedly dangerous, but their dangerous quality is continually undercut by their bathetic-comic references to their feeble husbands or the empty threats of suicide.

The Ending

The ending (*Met.* 6.24) is a traditional happy ending from comedy; directly after Jupiter’s intervention a wedding feast (*cena nuptialis*) appears, and all participants of the tale join in the celebration. Even the blocking character Venus is pacified and joins in.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Loraux (1987: 9ff.) for tragic hangings, and the commentaries on *Cupid and Psyche* ad loc.

¹⁷⁹ e.g. Lodge (1904–33) s.v. *suspendo*. Fine examples are e.g. ‘nisi me suspendo, occidi’ (‘If I don’t hang myself, I’m dead!’; *Rud.* 1415); ‘suspendam potius me quam tu tacita haec auferas’ (‘I would sooner hang myself than let you carry this away quietly’; *Asin.* 816), or the curse ‘suspende te’ (‘Hang yourself!’). Cf. also now Zimmerman et al. (2004: 229).

Furthermore, the setting is a heavenly theatre, *caelesti theatro* (6.23.1). In addition to this theatrical reference,¹⁸⁰ the ending also features a chorus of Muses and flute players, and Venus stages her own *scaena*, her own theatrical background, to her pantomime dance:

Venus suavi musicae superingressa formosa saltavit, scaena sibi sic concinnata ut Musae quidem chorum canerent, tibus inflaret Saturus, et Paniscus ad fistulam diceret. (*Met.* 6. 24.3)¹⁸¹

(Venus took to the floor to the strains of sweet music, and danced prettily. She had organized the performance so that the Muses sang in a chorus, a Satyr played the flute, and one of Pan's people sang to the shepherd's pipes.)

This penultimate sentence recuperates again the theatricality of the setting and the *dramatis personae*. *Tibiae* are instruments associated with drama as well as weddings, since they were played during a performance,¹⁸² sometimes as accompaniment to a dance towards the end of a comedy:

STEPHANUM siquidem mihi saltandum est, tum vos date bibat tibicini.

STICHUS et quidem nobis. SANGARINUS: tene, tibicen, primum; ...

lepidam et suavem cantionem aliquam occupito cinaedicam¹⁸³

(STEPHANUM Well then, if I have to dance, then you give the flute player something to drink.—STICHUS And ourselves, too!—SANGARINUS—Flute player, take the first drink then, [...] and play a merry and sweet lewd song.)

Grimal compares the ending to a mime,¹⁸⁴ a genre which involves a lot of dancing. Hall (2002: 29) makes a good argument for pantomime, which involves a silent dance to musical accompaniment. But the fact that *scaena* is not restricted to mime but also used for a comic *fabula*¹⁸⁵ indicates, in line

¹⁸⁰ Venus also wanted to go to the theatre of the gods (*theatrum deorum*) in *Met.* 6.16, indicating that this is the usual meeting place for the gods. Cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 539) on *Met.* 6.23, who argues that here *theatrum* means 'auditorium' rather than 'theatre'. The theatrical performance which follows, however, supports at least a double meaning here. For parallels to assemblies in epic and Menippean satire cf. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 537).

¹⁸¹ The passage is corrupted; this is Hanson's text. Helm (1931) prints 'ut Musae quidem chorum canerent aut tibus inflarent, Saturus et Paniscus ad fistulam dicerent'.

¹⁸² *Tibicen* in *Cas.* 798, *Stich.* 715ff, *Pseud.* 573a. On music in Roman comedy: Duckworth (1994: 99f.). They also form part of Psyche's entertainment in Cupid's palace in *Met.* 5.15 and of the pantomime in *Met.* 10.31f. Cf. also Zimmerman et al. (2004: 550) for a parallel from Menippean satire, and p. 551 for the dramatic quality of Venus' dance in her own *scaena*, finally arguing for satyr play as another possible intertext (p. 552).

¹⁸³ *Stich.* 757–60, in a festive celebration resembling a wedding feast.

¹⁸⁴ Grimal (1976: ad loc.) 'Vénus improvise une scène de mime (cf. X, 29 et suiv.)'

¹⁸⁵ e.g. *Plaut. Pseud.* 2: 'Plautina longa fabula in scaenam venit', ('a long play by Plautus comes on stage').

with the overall comic setting and the presence of more than one 'performer' (if the actions of the gods other than Venus are taken into account), a spectacle involving more than one generic reference, and it is comedy and all its connotations of a happy-ever-after marriage which is foregrounded: Saturus and Paniscus occupy themselves with musical entertainment derived from two comic genres,¹⁸⁶ and Vulcan takes over the unusual role of the (comic?) cook who provides the wedding feast—a stock role for cooks in comedy is to prepare the *cena* for a wedding: 'Vulcanus cenam coquebat' ('Vulcan cooked the dinner'; *Met.* 6.24.2).¹⁸⁷ Apuleius turns the mighty god of fire into the chef grilling the food for the gods' bourgeois wedding banquet.

With the birth of the child of the now-legal marriage, the family plot is complete, and besides being an allegory of the soul's search for love, an adaptation of epic tales, and a wilful Alexandrian portrait of Eros wounded by his own weapons, the story of *Cupid and Psyche* is also a drama with a happy ending, concentrating on the unification of a family.

9.8. CONCLUSION

The tale of *Cupid and Psyche* shows undeniably tragic elements; the death of a maiden before her wedding, the fleeting associations of Psyche with tragic heroines, and the participation of vengeful gods and kings in the plot are recognizable tragic patterns. These tragic references are especially common at the beginning of the story, but even then the gloomy situation does not remain unmitigated. Comic allusions undermine the tragic atmosphere from the very beginning, and take over the stage completely at certain points of the plot, and importantly at its ending.

There is a cluster of tragic references at the beginning of Psyche's story, and a cluster of comic ones at the end. The middle part of the story may be inspired by epic and other genres, but the substantial pattern forming a ring composition is dramatic, moving from the tragic to the comic.

A similar type of tragedy and comedy interspersed can be found in Plautus' *Amphitruo*, a play which Plautus himself calls a *tragicomoedia*. There, too, almost-tragic occurrences take place, the marriage between Amphitruo and Alcmena is close to breaking up, and suicide in comedy is never so close

¹⁸⁶ Grimal (1976: ad loc.): 'Ils <déclament> en s'accompagnant réciproquement du chalu-meau pastoral, comme les <cantores> du mime et de la comédie latine.'

¹⁸⁷ Vulcanus, Saturus and Paniscus have no equivalent in Lucian's *Ikaromenippos* 27, the closest parallel, cf. Helm (1906) and n. 101f above.

to success. However, Plautus uses the same mechanism of undercutting his highly tragic events with comic allusions: his gods are very human, Sosia and Mercury in the role of the slave act similarly, following the typical slave roles, and Alcumena, though appearing as if taken straight from a tragedy, appears on stage as a lusty woman, who, despite her imminent delivery of (as it will turn out to be) twins, is rather voluptuous and interested in sex, a most uncommon state for a Roman matron.¹⁸⁸ Dramatic irony abounds in both *Amphitruo* and *Cupid and Psyche*.

Apuleius includes both comic and tragic elements in the same plot, and by doing so directs his reader's sympathies in different directions. The alignment of Psyche with tragic heroines allows the reader to feel her sufferings with her, but at the end the marriage and the birth of her child is the just reward of a sympathetic character in comedy. Venus becomes less terrifying once she drops the attitude of the vengeful deity in order to scold like a common matron and aligns herself with comic stereotypes. Cupid's passivity is more easily understood as that of the comic *adulescens*, and the sisters of Psyche, too, gain from theatrical characterization.

Comedy can easily integrate tragedy and still remain comic, whilst tragedy is much more vulnerable to the loss of its generic identity. The somewhat comic characterization of the shuffling messenger in the *Antigone* is only one scene in the whole play, which, as a comic relief, sets off the following tragic events. Comedy, as seen in *Amphitruo*, can integrate many more tragic elements and still remain 'comic'.

It is also important that *Amphitruo*, despite initially being called a *tragicomedia*, is still categorized during later stages of the play as Plautine comedy. The gods who know that they take part in a play refer to it as a comedy after the prologue. A similar claim can be made for the tale of *Cupid and Psyche*: because it is not quite tragic and indeed bears some comic elements and most importantly a happy ending, the plot may be called comic, despite its earlier more tragic elements and the 'serious' ending with a *deus ex machina*.

This has further implications for our view of the novel as a whole. The view that the tale of *Cupid and Psyche* is a *mise en abyme*¹⁸⁹ of the whole novel is now more or less *communis opinio*. As *mise en abyme*, the tale mirrors Lucius' fate throughout the novel, even down to verbal parallels. The treatment of the

¹⁸⁸ For Alcumena's possible comicality cf. Christenson (2000: 39ff., with examples), but not everyone agrees, cf. e.g. the review by Porter (2002) *BMC*R (17 Sept.).

¹⁸⁹ Scholars seeing *Cupid and Psyche* as such: Junghanns (1932: 143ff.); Walsh (1970: 190ff.); Tatum (1969: 487–527); Smith (1998: 69–82) is the latest treatment on this topic. For the concept: Dällenbach (1989).

dramatic genres in the tale is then very likely to reflect the use of comedy and tragedy in the whole novel. Thus an analysis of the inset tale's use of drama reflects an analysis of that of the novel as a whole, and the appearance of Isis as a *dea ex machina* at the end, usually interpreted as Euripidean or mock-tragic influence, will have to be reassessed in due course.

Charite: How Comedies Do Not End

10.1. INTRODUCTION

The story of Charite is sometimes described as a ‘tragedy’,¹ but as far as I can tell no scholar so far has looked at it closely from this aspect,² and this will be briefly attempted in this chapter. Tragedy is however not the only genre alluded to in this part of the novel’s plot. The fates of Charite and Psyche, whose story is told to Charite to cheer her up, show several parallels.³ Since Psyche’s marriage bears some parallels to tragedy and comedy, it may be instructive to analyse Charite’s fate in this respect too. Papaioannou (1998) analyses the parallels between the marriages of Psyche and Charite, concentrating on the ‘parallel change of fortune from positive to negative and the dominant role of the motif of marriage in this reversal.’⁴ This study, too, will consider the two marriages, but in addition will discuss Charite’s concept of her role in her life story.

The story of Charite occurs in its outlines also in the *Onos*,⁵ but as always Apuleius rewrites the story: the first half of her story appears to be close to the plot in the *Onos*, but the second half, the messenger speech *Met.* 8.1ff., is completely rewritten by Apuleius.

Whilst Lucius-the-ass is imprisoned by the robbers, they also bring a young girl to their cave, who, as it turns out, has been kidnapped by them just before her wedding to her cousin Tlepolemus could take place. The girl cries, and is told the story of *Cupid and Psyche* to console her by the old woman who keeps house for the robbers. Her attempt to escape on the willing donkey is thwarted by the return of the robbers, and also a new arrival amongst them,

¹ Mainly because of the second part of the story, cf. n. 45 below.

² I was unable to check the following article: Brandao, J. L. Lopes (1996), ‘O romance de Càrite: uma tragédia em quatro actos’, in *Humanitas*, 48: 185–95.

³ Stabryła (1973); James (1987: 196ff.).

⁴ Psyche’s reversals of fortune cover e.g. the change from princess to sacrificial victim, and from there to Cupid’s wife.—Papaioannou (1998: 304 (quotation)); Charite’s wedding day 307ff.—for a Jungian approach, considering the marriage of Charite and Tlepolemus as unsuccessful: Barrett (1994).

⁵ A good comparison in Shanzer (1990).

a newcomer who calls himself Haemus. His stories of derring-do induce the robbers to elect him their new leader. Haemus persuades the robbers not to kill the girl, as they had planned to punish her for her escape attempt, but to sell her as a *meretrix* instead. Lucius is disgusted at the girl's flirtatiousness with the new robber, but then it turns out that he is in fact her disguised fiancé who succeeds in making the robbers drunk and then rescuing Charite. They return home and get married, taking Lucius with them. The donkey's adventures are narrated, and when Charite's story is picked up again at the beginning of *Met.* 8, she is happily married to Tlepolemus, who then gets killed by a rival for her hand (Thrasyllus), on whom she takes dreadful revenge, and finally kills herself.

The fate of Charite especially in that section is usually compared to that of Dido,⁶ to which especially the latter half of the 'Charite-complex'⁷, Charite's revenge for her dead husband on the man who murdered him, looks back constantly. Still, other intertexts may be detectable, too, including the *Charition mime*. A look at possible intertexts with tragedy, comedy and mime might also explain some of the discrepancies in the story pointed out by scholars, for example the change of character of the old woman and more importantly of Charite, and Thrasyllus' pursuit of Charite despite her being brought up to marry her cousin Tlepolemus.

The aspects which will be considered in this chapter are Charite's dream, words with a theatrical connotation, the old woman's character, Tlepolemus' false name, the concept of trickery, and Charite's revenge on Thrasyllus.

10.2. THE OLD WOMAN AS A DRAMATIC NURSE

The relationship between the robbers' anonymous old servant⁸ and Charite, the captive maiden, has struck scholars as strange and undefinable, given that within a few sentences (*Met.* 4.24–7) the old woman first threatens Charite with death, then calls her her mistress, and consoles her with the story of *Cupid and Psyche*.

⁶ Vergilian intertext: Forbes (1943–4), Walsh (1970: 54) and Hijmans et al. (1985: 7 *et passim*). Dido: Forbes (1943–4); Shumate (1996b); Harrison (1997). For an analysis of Dido in connection with tragedy: Rudd (1990=1976). Other literary references: Frangoulidis (1992); Finkelpearl (1998: 115–48) gives an excellent analysis of the multi-layered allusions to Dido and their function; see also Horsfall (2001: 133f.).

⁷ The phrase was invented by Junghanns (1932: 156–65).

⁸ For a balanced characterization: Hijmans et al. (1977: 63).

She [Charite] appeals to the drunken crone in such respectful tones that the apparently merciless jailor transforms herself into a devoted nurse whose sole duty is to comfort her frightened young mistress. Responding to the girl's address *mi parens* ['Dear mother'], with the courtesy title *mi erilis* ['my lady'], *Met.* 4.26, she proceeds to soothe the distraught captive and dispel her nightmares. [...] She begins to regard the situation in the light of its dramatic possibilities, to take Charite's rhetorical imperative *specta denique scaenam meae calamitatis* ['Just contemplate the tragedy⁹ that has befallen me.'], 4.26) as the beginning of a performance. The reality of their situation and their relationship disappears for the duration of the story. Without an understanding of the old woman's new dramatis persona her words of comfort would appear particularly incongruous.¹⁰

Scholarship has also concentrated on the fact that this old woman is later called *delirans et temulenta* ('crazy, drunken old hag'; *Met.* 6.25).¹¹ The old woman is introduced as *curvatam gravi senio* ('an old hag doubled up with age'; *Met.* 4.7), and when the robbers greet her with a list of fanciful curses reminiscent of comedy,¹² the expletives used against her are significant, since they align her with other comic old women from the beginning, for example Staphyla in *Aulularia*, who has to bear some fanciful abuse from her employer, or the bibulous Leaena at *Curc.* 128, whose description in 'hoc vide ut *ingurgitat* impura in se *merum avariter*, *faucibus plenis*' ('look how that dirty old woman greedily pours strong wine into herself, with distended throat') is certainly recalled in Apuleius' 'Quae diebus ac noctibus nil quicquam rei quam *merum* saevienti ventri tuo soles *aviditer ingurgitare*.' ('doing nothing whatever day and night except greedily pouring strong wine into that demanding belly!'; *Met.* 4.7).

It is strange that Apuleius' old woman is educated enough, despite her humble employment by the robbers, to narrate the sophisticated tale of *Cupid and Psyche* to the captured girl.¹³ It contains various literary and philosophical references, and is thus far beyond the horizon of a typical old woman to tell. As such she is, however, not the only literary old woman who is educated and literate beyond her means. As James (1987) has already hinted, in the passage cited above, she takes over a different role altogether, that of the 'devoted nurse', or *trophos*.

⁹ Thus the translation by Walsh (1970). For a discussion of *scaena* cf. below § 10.5.

¹⁰ James (1987: 121).

¹¹ e.g. Hijmans et al. (1977: 66f.).

¹² Cf. Desertine (1898: 107); Hijmans et al. (1977: 64) for parallels, including Plaut. *Pseud.* 412, 795f. (the idea of the old woman being an Orcus-reject), *Asin.* 892, and non-comic passages; Deufert (2002: 207).

¹³ For narratological consequences of her *persona* and different levels of narratorial and authorial influence cf. van Mal-Maeder, and Zimmerman (1998).

Tragic *trophoi* have usually been with their mistresses for a long time (*Medea*, *Hippolytos*) and show a degree of education surprisingly high for servants.¹⁴ This is also the case with their comic counterparts, for example Syra in *Merc.* 817ff., who complains tragicomically about the double standard. They may have long scenes in which they narrate complicated stories or events. A tragic nurse who reports to the audience is for example the old *trophos* of Sophocles' *Trachiniae*, who reports Deianeira's suicide (871ff.), or that of Euripides' *Andromache*, who reports Hermione's attempted suicide (802ff.). The role of the *trophos* and her charge very likely originates in (Euripidean) tragedy,¹⁵ but is also found in Latin tragedy (Phaedra's nurse in Seneca); it is instructive to analyse how far this stereotypical tragic scene may have influenced Apuleius' portrayal of the old woman and Charite here.

The old woman in 4.25 takes up a typical stance of a nurse (*nutrix* or *trophos*) of tragedy: when Charite wakes up frightened, the old woman asks Charite the reason for her distress, but at first in a none-too-gentle way: 'quid, malum, fleret, vel quid repente postliminio pressae quietis lamentationes licentiosas refricaret' ('[she told the girl] to explain why the deuce she was crying, or what had suddenly caused her to renew her wild wailing after being sound asleep'), fearing that Charite wanted to defraud their masters, the robbers, of their reward. Charite then appeals to her, reverently calling her *mi parens* ('dear mother'), and asks her to see *scaenam meae calamitatis* ('the tragedy that has befallen me', 4.26); then she tells the old woman her dream about her husband being murdered before her eyes. This is when the relationship between the two women changes from captive and keeper to charge and carer: Charite easily falls into dramatic language (cf. below on her suicide threat 4.25) and invites the old woman to play an appropriate dramatic role. The two women then take the typical positions of a tragic heroine and her *nutrix*. An example of such a relationship is the Poppaea scene of the Pseudo-Senecan *Octavia*, to which the dream scene bears some structural resemblance, which has so far not been pointed out.

10.3. CHARITE'S DREAM

In the *Octavia*, Poppaea appears on stage to narrate to her *nutrix* the nightmare she has had in the night after her wedding to Nero (712ff.): in her dream, she is sleeping in her newly-wed husband Nero's arms, when she

¹⁴ Cf. *Medea* 14f.; 34f.; *Hippolytos* 433ff.

¹⁵ Tragic *trophoi*: Oeri (1948: 85–7), to whom most of these observations are owed.

suddenly sees a crowd of mourning Roman matrons approaching her bed, including Nero's mother, followed by her previous husband and son, and finally Nero wielding a sword.

Similarities are situational as well as factual: both dreams occur directly after the wedding (Charite sees herself as already married to Tlepolemus, since some of the rites have already taken place), and in many respects reverse the wedding imagery. Since the language of the *Octavia* is ambivalent, it is not clear which of the two husbands (Nero or Crispinus) is then cruelly killed by having his throat cut within the dream.¹⁶ It is however clear that both Poppaea's and Charite's dreams predict the eventual unhappy outcome of the marriages just celebrated, in which the wedding procession turns into a funeral¹⁷—Charite's marriage will be cut short by Tlepolemus' murder. Both women will die of unnatural causes, and their dreams predict this, too. There is even a verbal similarity: Apuleius' 'nam *visa* sum mihi de domo, de *thalamo*, de cubiculo, de toro denique ipso violenter extracta per solitudines avias infortunatissimi mariti nomen invocare' ('I seemed to be forcibly dragged from my house, apartment, chamber, from my very couch, and to be calling on my most wretched husband's name through a trackless waste'; *Met.* 4.27), may recall *Oct.* 718f. '*visa* nam *thalamos meos* | celebrare turba est maesta' ('for it seemed that my marriage chamber was thronged by a sorrowful crowd').¹⁸

Apuleius' old woman then switches her allegiance immediately: her loyalty, before with the robbers (cf. *Met.* 4.25: 'Quod si pergis ulterius, iam faxo lacrimis istis, quas parvi pendere latrones consuerunt, insuper habitis viva exurare' ('If you go on like this, I'll have you burnt alive! I'll just ignore these tears of yours; bandits don't take much account of them.')), now belongs to the girl, whom she addresses in the way a comic *nutrix* calls on her charge: *Met.* 4.27: 'Bono animo esto, mi erilis, nec vanis somniorum figmentis terreare' ('Cheer up, my lady; don't be frightened by the baseless fancies of dreams'). *Mi erilis*, in this combination, occurs again only in *Met.* 9.16 in a similar situation of an old woman talking to her mistress.¹⁹ The sudden address as *mi erilis*, an archaism and unique (one should expect *mea era* instead of the adjective *erilis*),²⁰ strikes a discordant note, given that only a few sentences before the old woman had expressed her loyalty not to the girl but

¹⁶ Whitman (1978: 109f., 112) discusses who the victim of the sword actually is, Nero or Crispinus. Ferri (2003: 332) argues for Nero, but the case for Crispinus is quite strong. The ambiguity is probably intentional, cf. Kragelund (1982: 11ff.).

¹⁷ Whitman (1978: ad loc.) lists verbal parallels with Senecan tragedies.

¹⁸ Now also pointed out by Ferri (2003: 329).

¹⁹ Dickey (2002: 105) discusses the uniqueness of the phrase.

²⁰ Cf. Callebat (1968: 482 and 124). Cf. id. p. 499 for *bono animo esto* as a Plautine phrase.

to the robbers. There is no need in the story to call Charite by that title, and the explanation may derive from Apuleius' wanting to recreate a typical *dramatic* scene here, consisting of an old servant woman advising her mistress. It should be noted that *erilis* is used by Plautus as the equivalent for the Greek *τρόφιμος*, and as such usually in the masculine (cf. *Most.* 21, cf. also *Epid. arg.* 4), women are usually described as *erilis filia* (cf. *Aul.* 35f.). It is possible that Apuleius was unaware of the distinction, and used *erilis* for Charite to give the scene a specifically comic flavour. Furthermore, *faxo*, according to Callebat, is often used by persons in Apuleius whose characters are shaped after comedy.²¹

The old woman consoles her with an innocuous interpretation of Charite's dream,²² when she argues that dreams of violent murders, for example of cut throats, indicate the exact opposite, namely profit, since sometimes dreams indicate the opposite of what they show:

tunc etiam nocturnae visiones contrarios eventus nonnumquam pronuntiant. Denique flere et vapulare et nonnumquam *iugulari* lucrosum prosperumque proventum nuntiant

(even night-dreams sometimes tell of untruthful happenings. So tears, beatings, even murders sometimes portend a profitable and favourable outcome; *Met.* 4.27)

Poppaea's *nutrix* gives a similar 'scientific' explanation of her unpleasant dream to calm her down, *Oct.* 740ff:²³

Quaecumque mentis agitat intentus vigor,
ea per quietem sacer et arcanus refert
veloxque sensus.

(There is a sacred faculty, swift and mysterious, that brings back to the mind in sleep those matters that busied it when active and engaged.)

She also argues that sometimes dreams superficially suggest the opposite of what they actually mean: Nero's sword will not be used for slaughter, but sheathed for peace (*Oct.* 752f.: 'iugulo quod ensem condidit princeps tuus | bella haud movebit, pace sed ferrum teget' ('since your emperor buried his sword in a throat, he will not embark on wars, but hide the sword in peace')). Thus she turns the meaning of the bloody dream into its opposite.

²¹ Cf. Callebat (1968: 504). Both Venus in *Met.* 4.30 and Jupiter in *Met.* 6.23 use it, both in arguably comic speeches; cf. also now Zimmerman et al. (2004: 61).

²² On the function of the dream in the novel as predicting Tlepolemus' death (*Met.* 8.1): Perry (1923: 203); Merkelbach (1962: 75 with n. 4).

²³ On the influence of the nurse's characterization on her wishful interpretation of the dream cf. Ferri (2003: 333f.), with parallels for ancient dream interpretations as dreams showing the opposite of what they mean.

Both women seem to follow ancient dream-interpretation schemata as listed in the handbooks,²⁴ namely that one may dream the opposite of what may happen. Apuleius' old woman refers to murders in general by *iugulari*, although Charite had dreamt of her husband's head being smashed with a stone. There might be an allusion to Poppaea's dream in *Oct.* 752f. (*iugulari* in *Met.*, *iugulo...ensem condidit* in *Oct.*; the word implies rather the cutting of a throat) in the nurse's explanation in Apuleius, which in either case will come true. The similarity is apparent in the situation, with an old woman giving comfort to a young woman who has had a bad but prophetic dream about her husband being murdered.

The situation Apuleius conjures up is highly reminiscent of a tragic scene involving a heroine and her nurse, and Charite's invitation to the old woman to watch the *scaena* of her misery acts as a textual marker of Apuleius' emulating a scene of tragedy here, indicating for an informed first-time reader that the 'tragedy of Charite' is likely to have a sad outcome. Still, there may also be a comic subtext, since the old woman, who is characterized in a comic way, uses comic language to address Charite, and scenes between nurses and their charges also occur in comedy. The scene so far is ambivalent, with Charite emulating tragic heroines in language and expressive emotionality, whilst the old 'nurse' from the beginning of her introduction shows some comic elements.²⁵ The interpretation of dreams also features in Plautine comedies (*Curc.* 265ff., *Merc.* 225ff., *Rud.* 593ff.), though no scene in extant comedy is as close to Apuleius' passage as the tragic scene just discussed.

10.4. FEMININE SUICIDES

When Charite contemplates suicide shortly after her kidnapping, she acts like a tragic heroine (*Met.* 4.25): 'nunc spei salutiferae renuntiavi. Laqueus aut gladius aut certe praecipitium procul dubio capessendum est' ('now I've lost

²⁴ Cf. Artem. *Onir.* 2.60 and Plin. *Ep.* 1.18.2, which are much more unspecific than the literary scenes. Cf. Kragelund (1982: 22ff.) for discussion of the dream imagery. On how the dream predicts the outcome of the story: Frangoulidis (1993).

²⁵ The comic counterpart of a tragic scene is never far away: in the comedy *Querolus*, admittedly written about AD 400 but inspired by classical drama, a similar notion is brought up, albeit not in a nurse-heroine context: 'Talia egomet iam manifesta malo quam tua somnia. Funus ad laetitia spectat, lacrimae ad risum pertinent et mortuum nos ferebamus. Manifestum est gaudium' ('For my part, I prefer such real things to your dreams. A funeral looks to joy, tears relate to laughter, and we carried the dead away. This indicates joy for sure'; scene 3.43). Cf. Emrich (1965: ad loc.); Jaquemard-Le Saos (1994: 28); cf. Hildebrand (1842: ad loc.) on *Met.* 4.27.

all hope of being saved. The noose or the sword must be my only recourse, or at any rate I must throw myself off a cliff, no doubt about that'). Hijmans et al.²⁶ compare passages from Senecan philosophy, but in Seneca a larger list is given, including for example, drowning. The intertext to me rather seems to be more literary:²⁷ Lucan's Cornelia (9.106) in a dramatic passage contemplates

numquam veniemus ad *enses*
aut *laqueos* aut *praecipites* per inania iactus.

(I shall never resort to the *sword* or *noose* or *headlong* fall through the void.)

Besides this reference, the motif is mainly a tragic one: all three methods of death are suicides attempted by tragic heroines, and all three are relevant for the deaths in this section of the novel. Deianeira in *Hercules Oetaeus* wavers between sword and rock (845–68), and Seneca's *Phaedra*, whilst debating with her nurse, has similar ideas of dying (258ff.):

Decreta mors est: quaeritur fati genus.
laqueone vitam finiam an *ferro* incubem?
an missa *praeceps* arce Palladia cadam?

(Death is resolved; the question is how to die. Shall I send my life with a *rope*, or fall on a *sword*, or jump and fall *headlong* from Pallas' citadel?)

Interestingly there are two main ways of suicide for a woman in tragedy, and each is ultimately employed by the nurse and Charite: noose and sword.

Hanging oneself is considered as the most disgraceful and hideous death for a woman,²⁸ and it is chosen by Jokasta (in Sophocles), Phaedra, Leda, and Antigone. Aeschylus' Danaids threaten suicide, either by hanging themselves (*Supp.* 787–90) or by throwing themselves off a rock (*Supp.* 794–9), not unlike Charite. Another way of female suicide, by the sword, is important for Charite. The women who kill themselves with it are Deianeira (*Trachiniae*), Eurydice (*Antigone*), and Jokasta (Euripides' *Phoenissae*). Electra threatens to do so (688; 695ff.). According to Loraux, it is usually the virgins in tragedy who commit suicide by hanging themselves, since a bloodless death is associated with marriage, and suffocation with virginity.²⁹ A suicide committed by shedding blood, that is by the sword, is associated with childbirth or

²⁶ Hijmans et al. (1977: 187f.): Sen. *Epist.* 12.10 and *Ira* 3.15.

²⁷ Cf. Fraenkel (1932 = 1964), who does not mention Phaedra, on the usual three possibilities of suicide; his examples for exactly the combination Charite contemplates include a scholion to Pindar *Ol.* 1.97 (which quotes from Sophocles). Ar. *Ra.* 120ff. and other examples mention a tower instead of a rock. Cf. Ch. 8.8 above.

²⁸ Loraux (1987: 9).

²⁹ Loraux (1987: 15); for the medical ideology behind this concept: King (1998: 80ff.).

a very un-feminine character, as for example in Electra's case. Charite in her revenge tragedy turns herself from the scared maiden into a woman with a man's heart,³⁰ and thus the sword is a fitting suicide method for her. It is also Dido's weapon of choice (Verg. *Aen.* 4.646f.), and Charite shows many similarities with her.³¹ Comic characters, naturally, also contemplate similar suicides, as the old woman Staphyla, Plaut. *Aul.* 76ff., who however never puts this into action (cf. Ch. 9.7 above).

Apuleius' old woman, who like Staphyla has to bear abuse from her employers and who like her has an advisory function to her desperate young mistress, emulates her in another important aspect. She unexpectedly hangs herself, and thus chooses a suicide method threatened, but never realized, by Staphyla. The death of the old woman by hanging herself is irregular in a tragic context. She has nothing to do with either type of tragic heroine, being neither young nor involved in marriage, nor of the appropriate social status. Instead, she outdoes her tragic forerunners, by making the empty threats of a comic nurse come true in a passage which shows some Apuleian rewriting of the original. Her suicide, like her previous Dirce-like position (*Met.* 6.27), which is the last moment at which she is seen alive, is furthermore comically undercut, since the last thing she did before she hanged herself was dutifully to prepare dinner for her young men; they wolf it down without even one thought for her: 'cenam, quam postuma diligentia praeparaverat infelix anicula, ferinis invadunt animis' ('they ravenously attacked the dinner which the poor old woman had prepared with devotion which survived her death'; *Met.* 6.30).

In the second half of the story, where comedy is no longer in evidence, Charite's suicide is regular. She kills herself with the sword, since she is wounded through the betrayal and death of her husband. After her marriage, she cannot commit a virgin's suicide, and after her revenge on her husband's murder, a suicide along the lines of an 'active' and masculine tragic heroine is fitting for her. The main intertexts in her death are Vergil's Dido and tragedy.

10.5. SCAENA AND PERSONA

There may also be other indications of a dramatic scene. James has already referred to Charite's rhetorical imperative 'specta denique scaenam meae

³⁰ Cf. *Met.* 6.26, 8.11, 8.14 etc., a 'gender change' that she shares with Psyche (cf. *Met.* 5.22 'sexum audacia mutatur' ('[sc. she] showed a boldness that belied her sex')). On other 'masculine' women in Apuleius: Krabbe (1989: 109).

³¹ Cf. bibliography in n. 6.

calamitatis' ('Just contemplate the tragedy that has befallen me').³² The visualization (*specta*, 'just contemplate'), the theatrical word, and the melodramatic description of her fate, however, point not so much to a rhetorical, but rather to a 'metatheatrical' interpretation of Charite's words. *Scaena* is often translated³³ as *mise en scène*, but it may also refer to the 'act performed or rôle played by an individual' or the 'enactment of a specific scene';³⁴ here it may be used specifically to indicate her story's dramatic potential.³⁵ Whether there is a tragic reference or not, Charite certainly uses theatrical imagery here,³⁶ and is fully aware of the situation's tragic potential. Her appeal to the old woman as *mi parens by ista sancta canitie* ('advanced age with its venerable grey hair') causes the change in the old woman's attitude as well as creating the condition for the *nutrix*-heroine scene that follows. She concludes her speech with some further tragic references, inviting a comparison between her own fate and that of mythological precedents whose wedding was cruelly interrupted: 'sic ad instar Attidis vel Protesilai dispectae disturbataeque nuptiae' ('This was how they broke up and ruined my wedding; it was like the experience of Attis or of Protesilaos over again'; *Met.* 4.26).³⁷ Protesilaos at least seems to recall Euripidean tragedy.³⁸

This is, however, not the only instance where Charite has recourse to theatrical language. At a later stage of her story, she uses the idea of a picture of herself riding on the donkey, together with the words *fabula* and *historia*, to describe her fate (*Met.* 6.29): 'visetur et in fabulis audietur doctorumque stilis rudis perpetuabitur historia' ('this unprecedented theme ... will be on view, will be *heard in stories*, and will be immortalized by the pens of learned men'; trans. adapted). This may be another of her references to the literariness of her experiences, of which she seems strangely aware. The link of *fabula* with hearing a story rather than seeing it is not dramatic, but the word is still a catchphrase, as, ironically, the reader is aware that Lucius retells her story in his *Metamorphoses*, a *fabula* in itself.³⁹ Charite's speech, however, receives a distinctly comic colouring from the dramatic irony and from her strange

³² Cf. James (1987: 121), on *Met.* 4.26.

³³ Callebat (1968: 65f.).

³⁴ Hijmans et al. (1977: 151).

³⁵ Hijmans et al. (1977: 192).

³⁶ Theatrical imagery and especially the repeated occurrence of *scaena* in the Charite complex: Heine (1962: 207).

³⁷ For the rather obscure wedding of Attis: Hijmans et al. (1981: 199). Cf. also Catullus 63 (Attis) and 68 (Protesilaos). Cf. Nauta (2005: 97).

³⁸ Cf. Anderson (1909: 547ff.), who is however dismissive, and Hildebrand (1842: ad loc.). Hijmans et al. (1977: ad loc.) contemplate corruption regarding the reference to Attis' marriage, but cf. Pausanias 7.17, Arnob., *nat.* 5.5 for possible parallels.

³⁹ On *fabula* and *historia* in this passage: Hijmans et al. (1981: 56).

semi-awareness of acting out her part in a *fabula*: Charite's quaint reference to Jupiter (*Met.* 6.29: 'quodsi vere Iupiter mugivit in bove[m], potest in asino meo latere aliqui vel vultus hominis vel facies deorum' ('if it is true that it was Jupiter who bellowed in the form of a bull, there may lurk within my donkey some human identity or divine personality')) is similar to the instances of comic irony in *Amphitruo* or *Cupid and Psyche*,⁴⁰ which gives the scene a metatheatrical feel. She is right in the view that something not-quite-animal-like is hidden under her donkey's skin.⁴¹ The situational humour is not unlike that of Plautine comedies.

A rather amusing instance of this type of entertaining irony is found in *Met.* 6.27: Lucius' unsuccessful escape from the robbers' den is described as a bathetic version of the potentially tragic story of Dirce: instead of the young wife of Lykos, king of Thebes, who was strung onto a bull's horns, an old woman is holding on to a donkey's reins:

Quae vocis exitu procurrens [sc. Charite] videt hercules memorandi spectaculi scaenam, non tauro, sed asino dependentem Dircem aniculum.

(The shouting aroused her, and she came racing out. Heavens, what a dramatic and memorable scene she witnessed! There was the old woman playing Dirce, but clinging to an ass and not to a bull.)

She acts the part of an aged Dirce, as it were on her own stage, with Charite as the audience, hanging not from a bull but from a donkey when she tries to stop Lucius from escaping. This bathetic undercutting of a tragic myth functions as another comic reference. The language used in the preceding sentence may even be a direct borrowing from Plautus, enhancing the comic effect.⁴² The story of Dirce is potentially tragic (and was found in Euripides' *Antiope*),⁴³ but the idea of an unlikely Dirce hanging from a contraption which is not quite a bull is also exploited by Plautus *Pseud.* 199ff. (a threat to the courtesan Aeschrodora to make her bring enough profit from the meatsellers):

cras te, quasi Dircam olim ut memorant duo gnati Iovis
Devinxere ad taurum, item ego te distringam ad *carnarium*;
id tibi profecto taurus fiet.

(Tomorrow I will string you onto a *meat-frame like*, as they say, a long time ago the two sons of Jupiter bound *Dirce* to a bull. That will indeed be a bull for you!)

Again, most is made out of the spectacle in its visual impact, explicit through the word *scaenam*, and the tragic story is comically undercut. The theatrical word *scaena* here points to a comic version of a tragic plot.

⁴⁰ Cf. Ch. 9.3 above.

⁴¹ Cf. Rosati (1997: 113).

⁴² Feldbrugge (1939: 58); Hijmans et al. (1981: 45) on *suppetias ei ferre*.

⁴³ Hijmans et al. (1981: 45f.).

That is not the last use of this word in the Charite complex. Charite's second dream of Tlepolemus ends with the word *scaena* again: *Met.* 8.8: 'omnemque scaenam sceleris inluminavit' ('revealed the nefarious scene in its entirety'; trans. adapted). This corresponds to *Met.* 8.11 'scaena feralium nuptiarum' ('this staging of a marriage with death'), indicating the planned 'marriage' of Thrasyllus and Charite at Tlepolemus' grave, imitating the 'marriage to death' frequent in tragedies.⁴⁴ '*Scaena*' occurs as a leitmotif throughout the story, pointing out the theatricality of what happens to the persons. It is noteworthy, too, that the latter part of Charite's story, the fateful love-triangle, is narrated in a messenger speech reminiscent of tragic models.⁴⁵

Another important theatrical metaphor of the Charite complex which is resonant of theatrical imagery is *persona*, the mask.⁴⁶ It is used to describe Charite's trickery in *Met.* 8.9: 'sed illa [...] astuque miro *personata*' ('her role-playing was performed with admirable guile'), and similarly of Thrasyllus *Met.* 8.2 'amici fidelissimi *personam mentiebatur*' ('he falsely played the role of the truest of friends'). Deceit and trickery are portrayed in theatrical metaphors, and thus the reader is invited to see the dramatic potential of the situation.

10.6. CHARITE'S COMEDY

The Drunken Old Woman

Just after she finishes telling Charite the story of *Cupid and Psyche*, the old woman is called 'delira et temulenta' by the narrator ('crazy, drunken'; *Met.* 6.25). It seems that he now firmly changes his tone to comic, preparing for the comic rescue of the bride by her fiancé.

The stereotype of drunken old women is described by Athenaeus (10.440e) as 'ὅτι δὲ φίλοιον τὸ τῶν γυναικῶν γένος κοινόν' ('it is common knowledge

⁴⁴ Cf. also Hijmans et al. (1985: 112).

⁴⁵ Tatum (1979: 72f.); James (1987: 191); Hijmans et al. (1985: 29 and 134); or Sandy (1994: 1548), who compares it to Aeschylean messenger speeches. For a narratological analysis of the messenger speech cf. McNamara (2003: 13ff.). Cf. Frangoulidis (1999) for an analysis of tragic imagery in Charite's revenge on Thrasyllus.

⁴⁶ Cf. Heine (1962: 207) on the 'Maskendasein der Personen'. He also points out the frequency of theatrical metaphors in this part of the *Metamorphoses*—Laird (1990) writes on *persona* in literary theory (Benveniste, Genette), not in dramatic terms, as does Frangoulidis (2001), who applies Greimas' idea of roles and performances on the *Metamorphoses* (cf. May (2000/1)).

that womankind is fond of wine'), and he follows the sentence with an anthology of Old and New Comedy passages to prove this.⁴⁷ Drinking a lot is a trademark of the old woman of comedy.⁴⁸ Strangely enough, Oeri does not list our old woman in his brief discussion of novels,⁴⁹ despite the similar description, cf. for example Ter. *Andr.* 228ff.:⁵⁰

Lesbiam adduci iubes.
sane pol illa *temulenta* est mulier et temeraria
nec satis digna quoi committas primo partu mulierem.

(You order Lesbia to be fetched. That woman, by god, is certainly *fond of drink* and careless, and not trustworthy enough to be entrusted with a woman's first confinement.)

The most elaborate drunken old woman in Roman comedy is Leaena in *Curculio*, who is characterized as 'multibiba atque merobiba' ('drinking much and drinking strong wine'; *Curc.* 77), sings a song about wine (96ff.), and has already been recalled in the first appearance of Apuleius' old woman in the story.⁵¹ There is no place for drunkenness in the *nutrix* of tragedy, but as a comic characterization the *temulenta anus* ('crone fond of drink') is not a blind motif, as has occasionally been suggested, but a generic marker.

Comedy features several *nutrices*,⁵² and their presence shows once more the problem of distinguishing tragic *personae* from their comic parodies or equivalents, were it not for their alcohol problem. The nurse in *Truc.* 903f. is a presumed drinker:

Opu' nutrici, lact' ut habeat, veteris vini largiter
ut dies noctesque potet.

(We need it for the nurse, so that she has milk and a lot of good old wine to drink day and night.)

Comic nurses may act as confidante to their mistresses, for example in Terence's *Adelphoe*, where Sostrata receives comfort from her *trophos* Canthara. In the *Aulularia* Staphyla is the confidante of the desperate pregnant Phaedrimum. Pardalisca in the *Casina* is loyal both to wine (638f.) and to Cleostrata. Some *trophos* scenes in comedy are reminiscent of their tragic counterparts; servant women rushing out of the house to report something dreadful which has happened inside (cf. *Casina*, *Amphitruo*, *Eunuchus*) recall

⁴⁷ Oeri (1948: 13–18). For a completely different interpretation (drunkenness indicating truthfulness) cf. Hijmans et al. (1981: 24).

⁴⁸ Oeri (1948: 39–46), with more examples.

⁴⁹ Oeri (1948: 74f.).

⁵⁰ *Temulenta* is also used of Pythias Ter. *Eun.* 655.

⁵¹ Cf. § 10.2 above.

⁵² Oeri (1948: 53–60).

similar occurrences in tragic messenger speeches,⁵³ from which this literary technique is derived.⁵⁴

Harrison⁵⁵ compares the old woman who tells the *Cupid and Psyche* story to an elegiac *lena* because of her 'cynical manipulation of a younger woman for personal gain and in her alcoholic tendencies.' He lists Ovid's Dipsas (*Am.* 1.8.34) and Propertius' Acanthis (4.5.75). It is, however, clear that the old woman is not a *lena*, and has no claim to own or even use Charite, whom she calls in a very un-*lena*-like way *mi erilis*. Both Dipsas and Acanthis, however, have ultimately many things in common with comic *ancillae* like Scapha in *Mostellaria*.⁵⁶ There is no reason not to assume a link with comedy here.

This may not be the only indication of her partiality for drink: within her story she refers to wine in *Met.* 6. 24 'poculum nectaris, quod vinum deorum est' ('a cup of nectar, the gods' wine'). Oudendorp thinks it is a valid statement by an old woman and in line with New Comedy, although Kenney (1990a: ad loc.) prefers to consider the phrase as a gloss, since the old woman, he argues, does not intrude as commentator into her story. There may, however, be another indication in the proverb she applies to Cupid in *Met.* 6.22, 'ad armillum redit' ('he reverted to his former role'; *Met.* 6.22); it is generally transmitted in the form 'anus rursus ad armillum' ('the old woman returns to the bottle'), and indicates people doing what they usually do, by indicating that old women like their drink.⁵⁷

If these allusions already indicate the change from a caring paratragic *nutrix* to a drunken old woman, a change of genres after the narration of the tale of *Cupid and Psyche* from Charite's potential tragedy to a comic story is not abrupt at all and well worth investigating. Apuleius is quite aware that when he introduces the drunken-old-woman motif during and after the tale of *Cupid and Psyche*, he links his character with similar women in New Comedy.

Tlepolemus

This comic tone, foregrounded by the indication of the old woman's drunkenness, continues in the characterization of the other persons, namely

⁵³ Oeri (1948: 60).

⁵⁴ Leo (1912a: 133ff.) mentions the Phrygian in *Orestes*, or the servant woman in *S.Tr.*

⁵⁵ Harrison (1998: 54f. with n. 13).

⁵⁶ Comic ancestry: Oeri (1948: 76); Leo (1912a: 146ff.).

⁵⁷ Kenney (1990a: ad loc.); Otto (1890: 28). Tosi (1991: 372) discusses *Met.* 6.22 and 9.29. Zimmerman et al. (2004: 548) argue convincingly for the inclusion of *quod vinum deorum est* in the text. Cf. also *ibid.* p. 530 on *Met.* 6.22. For Apuleius' use of the proverb cf. the miller's wife, who (*Met.* 9.29) 'ad armillum revertit' ('she reverted to her old tricks').

Tlepolemus after his sudden appearance, and Charite, who in the eyes of Lucius moves from *virgo* to *scortum*. Suddenly Apuleius manages to switch from a tragic note to a decidedly comic *dramatis personae*.

Tlepolemus appears amongst the robbers in 7.5 and is described as a tall young man, 'plane centunculis disparibus et male consarcinatis semiamictum' ('his body was only half-covered with a patchwork cloak which was ill-fitting and roughly stitched together'). The fact that this is a masquerade is revealed only at *Met.* 7.12. A Plautine intertext, however, immediately indicates to an informed reader that he might be disguised: *Epid.* 455 'Proin tu alium quaeras quoi centones sarcias' ('do you then look for another person to stuff him with patched-up stories') puns on the meaning of *cento* as 'patchwork' and *centones sarcire* as 'telling lies'.⁵⁸ Tlepolemus indeed employs some rather Plautine trickery to save his beloved. The story he tells about his disguise as a woman is quite incredible⁵⁹ and thus, especially in retrospect, funny.

Impersonation features in some Euripidean tragicomedies (for example *Helen*), and there is one clear case in *Miles Gloriosus*, where the bridegroom and suitor Pleusicles dresses up as a ship's captain in order to free his beloved from the wrongful captor, a soldier.⁶⁰ As we saw before (cf. Ch. 6), the rags he wears might indicate tragedy, whilst the garment itself (*centunculis*) may indicate a more comic genre, mime.

The *Charition* mime (*P.Oxy.* III.413) has been taken as influencing Apuleius here.⁶¹ The fact that this tragic rescue motif is found comicized in mime may point towards a generally theatrical and comic atmosphere in the story. Readers knowing the mime and comedy will expect a happy outcome, and the rescue mission succeeds by deception like those in comedy and mime.

Charite, as she tells the old woman before she recalls her nightmare, is brought up with her cousin Tlepolemus whom she wants to marry, but the wedding is interrupted on its very day. Marriage between cousins was possible in Roman law, but quite rare.⁶² It is interesting that this story clashes with the second half of the Charite complex, where Thrasyllus is portrayed as a suitor to Charite, as if the marriage between the cousins had not been arranged beforehand.

⁵⁸ Hijmans et al. (1981: 110), who also compare *Amph.* 367, *Capt.* 692, *Cas.* 95, *Pseud.* 353, 540. Cf. Keulen (2003a: 160) on another use of the patchwork cloak in *Met.* 1.6. On the diminutive *centunculus* in Apuleius cf. Callebat (1968: 34).

⁵⁹ Thus Hijmans et al. (1981: 135).

⁶⁰ Cf. Duckworth (1994: 169f.) for examples. See also Junghanns' statement: 'Komödie der Täuschungen und Irrungen' (1932: 153); Rosati (1997: 112).

⁶¹ Cf. Santelia (1989). For a plot summary of *Charition* cf. Ch. 9.3 above.

⁶² Hijmans et al. (1977: 192f.), with examples and further literature. Treggiari (1991: 114) states that cousin-marriage is not the Roman norm.

Charite is kidnapped by the robbers, and it is her bridegroom who will have to rescue her from their clutches. This situation, once it is clear that her bridegroom is indeed coming to the rescue, is certainly not tragic,⁶³ but shows some similarities with comic plots, where marriage between close relatives is generally common, too. In Menander's *Aspis*, for example, the unnamed sister of Kleostratos is to be married to Chaereas, a young man living in Chairestratos' household since he is the son of Chairestratos' wife from a former marriage. The young people were brought up together (cf. 1.263f. 'τῇ παιδί ταύτῃ γέγονε Χαιρέας ὁδὶ | σύντροφος ὁ μέλλων λαμβάνειν αὐτήν' ('this girl's fiancé, Chaereas here, has been brought up with her'; trans. Arnott)), and are to marry on the day the comedy is set, but the ceremony is called off since (false) news is brought that Kleostratos has died in battle. In the end, she does marry her step-cousin Chaereas, and Kleostratos probably marries his cousin, the daughter of Chairestratos.

The stories in both comedy and Apuleius oscillate between a tragic potential and a comic plot. The *Aspis* is quite close to tragedy, since after one assumed death (Kleostratos') the intrigue to fool Smikrines, one of the two brother *senes*, involves the pretended death of the other (Chaerestratos), who is told to 'act tragically' and stage his own death: 'δεῖ τραγωδῆσαι πάθος | ἄλλοῖον ὑμᾶς' ('you must perform a sombre tragedy'; *Aspis* 329f.).

The end of the comedy is not extant, but there is no doubt that both deaths will be revealed as false, and the wedding will doubtless take place despite its interruption. Other comedies centred around an interrupted wedding are for example Menander's *Samia* and Terence's *Andria*, and in both cases the comedy ends with the wedding as arranged—a fate, as it seems, also awaiting Charite and Tlepolemus. The tragedy (which is how Charite saw her story when she recounted her life to the old woman) is suddenly turned into a comic situation, and Charite is reunited with her lover immediately after his appearance, like the lovers in the rescue tragedies and comedies. Like these plays, the story of Charite, which had some tragic potential, thus apparently ends with a wedding. Little does the first-time reader guess that s/he will return to Charite and Tlepolemus, and that then their story will once again be a tragic one.

Charite: *virgo* or *scortum*?

Before the tale of *Cupid and Psyche* is told, Lucius describes Charite playing out her role as a tragic heroine lamenting her fate and in need of consolation from the old woman: *Met.* 4.23 she is 'unicam virginem, filo liberalem [...]

⁶³ Unlike the interrupted weddings Charite refers to before, those of Attis and Protesilaos (*Met.* 4.26). The 'tragedy' coming closest to this rescue plot is Euripides' *Helen*.

maerentem et crines cum veste sua lacerantem' ('one young girl. Her appearance proclaimed her to be free-born [...]. She was crying, and tearing at her hair and clothes.'), a freeborn girl abducted by robbers, who want to sell her back to her parents for ransom. The vocabulary he uses to describe her, however, is taken from Plautus, cf. *Persa* 521, *Curc.* 209 etc. for this use of *liberalis*.

Once Tlepolemus appears and a happy ending may be envisaged, the robbers are persuaded by him to contemplate selling Charite off to a brothel instead of killing her (as they now plan to do). The language Tlepolemus uses to suggest the sale (*Met.* 7.9) is Plautine:⁶⁴ 'puellam istam *praestinare* condigne natalibus suis' ('to pay ... a suitable price for one of such high birth'). The selling of kidnapped girls to *lenones* occurred both in real life⁶⁵ and in literature (including the novel⁶⁶), and especially in comedy (for example *Rudens*), where many of the girls sold to a *leno* are still *virgines*, and miraculously remain so until they are rescued by their lovers, just like Charite.

The ass silently reproaches Charite for her fickleness in *Met.* 7.11, scornfully describing her as a 'scortum: nec te conscientia stimulat, sed adfectatione calcata inter lanceas et gladios istos *scortari* tibi libet?' ('Isn't your conscience pricking you? Have you trodden your affection underfoot, that you like to play the wanton here among these spears and swords?') The scene gains an expressiveness through the Plautine and Terentian word, cf. Plaut. *Asin.* 270; Ter. *Haut.* 206.⁶⁷ Hijmans et al., however, point out⁶⁸ that this is the first instance of *scortari* used for the action of a woman ('to behave like a prostitute'), and that in comedy it is employed of men ('to consort with prostitutes'). The gender change however is of secondary importance, as *scortari* and *scortum* are intrinsically linked, and Apuleius wants to point out Charite's change of status in the eyes of Lucius.⁶⁹ In any case, an informed reader will be triggered by the verbal and contextual reminiscences to expect the ending of a comedy.

10.7. CHARITE'S TRAGEDY

The wedding of Charite and Tlepolemus after the rescue thus introduces a false comic closure through a happy ending. Their story, however, continues

⁶⁴ For *praestinare* 'to buy': Desertine (1998: 20); Callebat (1968: 484), Hijmans et al. (1981: 143). In *Met.* 1.5 *praestinator* is used in a comic scene to describe a comic food-merchant, cf. Keulen (2003a: 146).

⁶⁵ Cf. Riess (2001: 107) on real-life abductions.

⁶⁶ Hijmans et al. (1977: 178); Hijmans et al. (1981: 144) for further literature.

⁶⁷ Callebat (1968: 516). Cf. also Karakasis (2005: 39) on the comicality of *scortor* (*Met.* 7.11).

⁶⁸ Hijmans et al. (1981: 157).

⁶⁹ Cf. § 10.3 above on *erilis* and a similar linguistic problem.

after a long break (during which the story follows Lucius), with a messenger speech at the beginning of Book 8 announcing their death.

The story of a girl imprisoned in a cave, whose fiancé is named Haemus, albeit only as a deceitful name chosen for himself to deceive the robbers,⁷⁰ certainly shows some (hitherto unnoticed) playful intertext with tragedy. Haimon is the name of Antigone's fiancé, and like Tlepolemus he sets out to rescue his bride from the cave. Unlike Haimon, however, Tlepolemus is in time, ensuring the untragic ending of that episode of the Charite complex. In the *Onos*, the girl and her fiancé are not named, and it may be that Apuleius introduced this playful inversion of a well-known tragic plot as another comic device.

There are however several undoubtedly tragic elements in Charite's story, mostly from the second part, where her and Tlepolemus' deaths are narrated in a messenger speech. In the *Onos*, a very short messenger speech⁷¹ (*Onos* 34) reports their death in a chariot accident next to the sea, not unlike Euripides' Hippolytos. Apuleius, again in a messenger speech, which is however much more elaborate, creates a story of revenge with the focus on Charite, giving the story even more tragic potential. The two lovers do not die at the same time, but the plot concentrates on the manly character of Charite and her revenge on Thrasylus.

The account of Charite's death at *Met.* 8.1ff. resembles in style and structure a tragic messenger speech, narrated, not seen 'on stage', as it were.⁷² There are several incidents in the story which are inspired by Dido, but others are noticeably tragic in origin. It may perhaps suffice here to concentrate on a few examples: Charite's marriage to death, Haemus' name, and the blinding of Thrasylus, which is portrayed with reference to several tragedies. As a self-fashioned tragic heroine, Charite uses an interesting means of disposing of Thrasylus: she blinds him with a pin, at the same time delivering a monologue on death being preferable to blindness, a notion also found at *S. OT* 1368.⁷³ She continues by calling on the Furies: 'ultrices habebis pronubas et orbitatem comitem et perpetuae conscientiae stimulum'

⁷⁰ Diverse reasons are brought forth for his name: Haemus' Isiac connections: Merkelbach (1962: 72ff.). Bacchic connotations: James (1987: 192ff.); Hijmans (1978b: 115f.) only notes links with the Thracian mountain, Greek *αἷμα*, 'blood' (thus also dos Santos Palma Granwehr (1981–2: 146)), and a pun on 'aemulus virtutis paternae' ('his heir and rival in valour'), as Haemus describes himself, cf. Hijmans (1978a) for more detail.

⁷¹ The passage is possibly summarized from a longer Greek original text, but there is no reason to assume that the epitome changed the content as well as the length of the section. For a discussion of a similar problem cf. also Ch. 7.2 above.

⁷² According to McNamara (2003: 13ff.) the pointed theatricality of the messenger speech points towards the unreliability of its narrator.

⁷³ Cf. Hijmans et al. (1981: 121).

(‘your bridesmaids will be the avenging Furies; blindness will be your groomsman, and the prick of undying guilt’; *Met.* 8.12). As Hijmans et al. (1985: 125) remark, Sen. *Tro* 1132f. features *pronuba* (‘bridesmaid’) with the same combination of *thalamus* (‘bridal chamber’) and *fax* (‘marriage torch’) as Charite’s preceding sentence. Seneca’s *Oedipus* is also recalled by Charite’s ‘attolle vacuum faciem’ (‘lift your eyeless face’), which is reminiscent of (*Oed.* 1011f.) ‘quo avertis caput | vacuosque vultus’ (‘Why turn away your head and empty eyes?’). Charite is certainly again trying to emulate tragic models.

The means of revenge is dramatic. Hijmans et al. (1985) quote (p. 123) Donatus on Ter. *Eun.* 740:

(atqui si illam digito attigerit uno, oculi ilico effodientur): femineae minae sunt et in libidinosos quam maxime ... in oculos autem maxime saevire feminas et tragoediae fere et comoediae protestantur.

((‘and if he touches her with one single finger, his eyes will be poked out at once!’). These are female threats, and especially against libidinous men ... for both tragedies and comedies generally claim that women rage most against eyes.)

The wish to tear out a man’s eyes is comic, but actually doing so with a pin has tragic intertexts: Charite’s hairpin *Met.* 8.13 recalls the brooches of Iokaste with which Oedipus blinds himself (S. *OT* 1268f.), or those which blind Polymestor in E. *Hec.* 1170.⁷⁴ By choosing to use this tragic way of disposing of her enemy, Charite again deliberately casts herself into the role of a tragic heroine, a role she constantly claims for herself,—but this time her situation is indeed truly tragic. The end of the messenger speech consists mainly of two monologues by Charite, one vengeful and addressed to Thrasyllus (*Met.* 8.12), one addressed to her own tears (*Met.* 8.13), both full of pathetic and tragic diction.⁷⁵ The messenger refers to this revenge specifically by a tragic term: ‘marriage to death’: *Met.* 8.11 ‘scaena feralium nuptiarum’ (‘this staging of a marriage with death’). This concept recalls the exposure of Psyche by her parents, but unlike Psyche’s first ‘marriage’, Charite’s staging of Thrasyllus’ marriage to death is final. The metatheatrical language (*scaena*) invites comparison to tragedy, and Charite is well aware of the staginess of her own revenge drama for the death of her husband.⁷⁶ The end of the messenger speech, finally, telling of her sad demise, is the fitting tragic account of her off-stage heroic suicide.

⁷⁴ Cf. Hijmans et al. (1985: 127). Frangoulidis (1992: 435ff.) interprets Thrasyllus’ blinding as a reminiscence of Odysseus and Polyphemus, which to me seems secondary.

⁷⁵ Cf. Hijmans et al. (1985: ad loc., 118ff.) for a stylistic analysis of the passages.

⁷⁶ Cf. Frangoulidis (1999) for wedding imagery in Charite’s ‘second marriage’. For the concept cf. Ch. 9 n. 27 above.

10.8. CONCLUSION

Charite quite self-consciously takes a melodramatic stance in most of her actions, acting like the resourceful heroine of a romantic novel, which in itself is a genre quite conscious of tragedy. Charite feels compelled to act like a tragic heroine when she is kidnapped, contemplating the diverse suicide methods open to women in tragedy. In the first part of her story, however, her actions are partially undercut by comic stock elements, such as the unrealistic rescue plot of Haemus/Tlepolemus. The old woman, too, who at first plays the tragic nurse to Charite's heroine, quickly turns into a stereotypical comic wine-friendly crone; Haemus/Tlepolemus suggests that Charite, like the heroines of several comedies, might be sold into a brothel. The rescue and the final marriage between the two lovers creates the idea of a closure appropriate to comedies, which, even if they had some tragic potential, ended with the protagonists happily married.

It is only in the second part of the Charite complex, in the tragic messenger speech, that Charite's real tragic potential comes to light, that is when her tragedy-inspired actions are no longer comically undercut. Instead, a thorough tragic situation, completely invented by Apuleius, evolves. Charite is, from beginning to end, true to herself as a heroine from tragedy, and the often noted change in her, from timid young bride to avenging fury, is not so much one of character as one of typical heroines of changing dramatic genres. Her erstwhile happy marriage turns into tragedy, as in Apuleius' words on the death of Philemon: 'comoediam eius prius ad funebrem facem quam ad nuptialem uenisse' ('his comedy reached the funeral torch before the wedding torch'; *Flor* 16.18), where unexpectedly the wedding torches at the end of a comedy (a generic marker) turn into funeral torches. Charite, finally, kills herself in a manner inspired by tragedy, quoting from tragedies as well as emulating the tragic idea of 'marriage to death' in her suicide. This movement through diverse dramatic genres is paralleled by the development of Psyche in the inset tale, though the ending is different in the two cases.

‘Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light’: *Metamorphoses*, Book 10

11.1. INTRODUCTION

Book 10 has a particular theatricality, which has been recognized before. Fick-Michel (1990: 223) calls it a ‘*liber de spectaculis*’, ‘a book of spectacles’,¹ since, as she argues, it mentions comedy and tragedy (10.2), gladiatorial combat (10.18.1), a *venatio* or hunting spectacle (10.18.2 and 35.2), a weapon dance (29.4), (indirectly) a mime, that of Pasiphae (20–2),² and ends with a ballet (30–34.3). For Finkelpearl, it is ‘a study in rewriting and repetition, in *fortuna*’s endless cycles and the protagonist’s futile attempts to progress, as echoed in the author’s vain struggles with his literary tradition.’³

For me, the importance of Book 10 lies in its theatricality, too, both in the main narrative and in the inset tales, just before the beginning of Book 11. Some of Fick-Michel’s *spectacula* are not ‘dramatic’ in the narrower sense, for example the *venatio*, and thus will not be considered here, whilst other dramatic elements on the metaphorical level, not mentioned by Fick-Michel, need to be included in the discussion. Although Finkelpearl’s concept of playing with the literary tradition is indeed important, I will try to combine a look at tragic and comic elements in Book 10 with an analysis of how Apuleius manages not only to cross genres, but also to merge them in a constant metamorphosis not only of the man Lucius into a beast, but also of tragedy into comedy, or vice versa.

Previously this study looked at the theatricality in the main narrative and the inset tales separately; now I will look first at the theatricality of the two inset tales, then at that of the main narrative, and analyse how the interaction of both levels of the narrative is influenced by dramatic elements, and how far an overlap of motifs can be established in both.

¹ Cf. also Zimmerman (2000: 20f.) on *spectacula* and their link with *curiositas* in Book 10.

² Apuleius associates the noble woman and the donkey (10.20–2) with the Pasiphae mime as acted under Domitian, cf. Mart. *Spect.* 55, through reminiscences to ‘Pasiphae’ 10.19 and the mother of the Minotaur 10.22.

³ Finkelpearl (1998: 149); cf. p. 150 for a useful schematic analysis of Book 10.

11.2. THE INSET TALES: 'PHAEDRA' AND 'MENANDER'

'Phaedra'

In 10.2–12 Apuleius announces that he will switch his tone from comic to tragic. A discerning reader can soon detect the story he starts to tell to be a version of the Phaedra story: a stepmother falls in love with her stepson, cannot control her passion for him, and falls victim to love sickness. She orders the young man to come to her, and discloses her passion to him. He is shocked, but prevaricates and promises to indulge her once his father is away. When the father leaves for a journey at the wife's instigation, she tries to seduce the unwilling young man. The stepmother then, enraged, realizes that her stepson has no intention of obeying her, and decides to poison him. A slave is sent to procure poison from a doctor, and by accident it is the evil woman's own son who drinks it instead of her stepson. The boy collapses, apparently dead, and she is quick to accuse her stepson of poisoning her child before his father. The stepson is put on trial, and only when the doctor who mixed the poison turns out to be in the jury and asserts that it is only a sleeping-potion that the younger son has been given is the stepson acquitted and the grave of the younger son opened to find him alive and well. The evil stepmother is then banished into exile.

The tale's multi-layered⁴ literary ancestry includes the two Euripidean *Hippolytoi* (*Kalyptomenos* and *Stephanephoros*) and the Sophoclean *Phaedra*. Lycophron, too, may have written a *Hippolytos* tragedy, while Parthenios dedicated two *Erotica Pathemata* (14, 18) to the story. The mainly lost *Kalyptomenos* portrays Phaedra as more shameless, disclosing her love to Hippolytos *on stage*, and thus was subjected to contemporary criticism. In the more successful *Stephanephoros*, Phaedra is nobler and more decent, and the character of the nurse as a go-between is included to make the plot more seemly.⁵

There are also close similarities between Apuleius' and Seneca's *Phaedra*.⁶ Seneca's plot is in many respects similar to that of the *Kalyptomenos*,⁷ and as in Apuleius the 'Phaedra' stepmother declares her love to her stepson openly and without a go-between. Not all Potiphar stories with this motif, however, need to be based on the *Kalyptomenos*,⁸ and it is uncertain whether either of

⁴ Cf. e.g. Finkelpearl (1998: 149ff.) for the polyphony of intertexts.

⁵ Cf. the plot reconstructions and evidence collected in Barrett (1964: 10–45).

⁶ Seneca's literary ancestry: Coffey-Mayer (1990: 5–10).

⁷ Zintzen (1960) wants to reconstruct the *Kalyptomenos* from passages where Seneca agrees with the Greek novels and Josephus. He assumes confidently (p. 5 n. 7) that Apuleius depends on Seneca.

⁸ Zimmerman (2000: 422).

the lost tragedies, Euripides' *Kalypomenos* or, as Zwierlein speculates, Sophocles' lost *Phaedra*, is the ultimate dramatic source for Apuleius.⁹

Zwierlein (1987: 55–68) uses the 'Phaedra' story in Apuleius to reconstruct the lost *Phaedra* of Sophocles. He takes it for granted that Apuleius follows the Greek original closely here and thus can assume that the Greek author followed a tragedy, an assumption problematic in itself, since no similar inset tale leaves traces in the *Onos*. Problematic, too, is his reading of Prop. 2.1.47ff., which he takes to refer to a poisonous cup Phaedra uses to kill Hippolytos (rather than to love potions as in E. *Hipp.* 509, as is generally believed), which he speculates may have happened in the Sophoclean tragedy.

There are, however, some verbal as well as thematic references to Seneca's *Phaedra*, which thus presents itself as the closest parallel. A few examples may suffice:¹⁰ Sen. *Phaedr.* 646ff. resembles *Met.* 10.3, both offering the excuse of recognizing the face of the father in the son. At 10.3 the stepmother is reluctant to call her stepson *filium*, which resembles *Phaedr.* 609–11. Both women, though under different circumstances, claim to have been threatened by the young man. Apuleius becomes very Senecan in the use of fire imagery for the symptoms of love sickness: 10.2 resembles *Phaedr.* 362, 589. Apuleius characterizes the disease by 'pallor deformis, marcentes oculi, lassa genua, quies turbida, et suspiritus cruciatus tarditate vehementior... flebat... utrimsecus iactatae crebriter laterum mutuae vicissitudines' ('they are all hideously pale, their eyes droop, their knees are unsteady, their sleep is disturbed, and their sighs grow stronger as the torture lingers on... she kept weeping... frequent tossing and turning from one side to the other'), all of which find correspondences in *Phaedr.* 360–86,¹¹ and the *noverca's* (stepmother's) tears recall *Phaedr.*

⁹ Zwierlein (1987: 67 n. 134) dismisses direct influence from Seneca; Fiorencis and Gianotti (1990=2000: 281) take all *Phaedr.*s to be the intertext, rather than the Senecan tragedy.

¹⁰ Parallels: Zimmerman (2000: ad locc.); Finkelppearl (1998: 164); Zwierlein (1987: 68); Erbse (1950). A comprehensive comparison of Euripides (*Stephanephoros*), Seneca, and Apuleius can be found in Kautzky (1989: 193–8).

¹¹

Spes nulla tantum posse leniri malum
finisque flammis nullus insanis erit.
torretur aesto tacito et inclusus quoque,
quamvis tegatur, proditur vultu *furor*;
erumpit *oculis ignis et lassae genae*
lucem recusant, nil idem dubiae placet
artusque varie iactat incertus dolor
.
.
.
.
non idem vigor,
non ora tinguens nitida purpureus rubor;
populatur artus crura, iam gressus tremunt
tenerque nitidi corporis cecidit decor.
.
.
.
lacrimae cadunt per ossa et assiduo genae
rore irrigantur

381. Both women are impatient: Apuleius' 'inpatientia furoris altius agitata' ('in her inability to contain her madness, the wound struck deeper') and '*impatiens vel exiguae dilationis*' ('but the woman could not endure even a slight delay', *Met.* 10.4) recall Seneca's 'sed Phaedra praeceps graditur, *impatiens morae*' ('But Phaedra approaches impetuously, impatient with delay', *Phaedr.* 583). At *Met.* 10.3 the *noverca's furor* ('madness') is a leitmotif, and recalls Phaedra (179ff., but also Dido at *Aen.* 4.91, 101 etc.). 10.3 'senili tristitie' ('with an old man's concern') recalls *Phaedr.* 451–3, and 10.3 'ergo miserere tua causa pereuntis' ('So have pity on me, because I am wasting away because of you') recalls *Phaedr.* 624, 636, 671 ('*miserere amantis*', 'pity a lover'). Other instances could be added, but at least for the first part, these parallels establish Seneca as the dominant tragic intertext for the *noverca* story.

The story does not need to have only a tragic source, however: in Latin literature the first mention of the myth is Verg. *Aen.* 7.761f., followed by Ov. *Met.* 15.498ff. and *Fast.* 6.733ff.¹² *Heroides* 4 resembles more the lost *Kalyptomenos*. Other parallels include Genesis 39 (Potiphar), Josephus, and the Greek novel,¹³ which sometimes even quotes directly from the *Kalyptomenos*. The supposedly 'true' story of Antiochos and Stratonike, who falls in love with her stepson and needs to marry him in order to regain her health after her bout of love sickness (Plut. *Dem.* 38, App. *Syr.* 59–61 etc.) according to Lucian. *Salt.* 59 even makes it into pantomime. The story as told in Apuleius is also found in the mime plot of the *Oxyrhynchus* or *Moicheutria* mime (*P.Oxy.* III.413), where the mistress propositions her slave, Aesopus, despite his having a sweetheart, and the plot also involves a false death and the use of sleeping potions. Finally, *declamationes* have similarly fierce stepmothers, for example Sen. *Con.* 6.7.¹⁴

(No hope exists that such an affliction can be eased; there will be no end to the flames of insanity. The fever silently burns her, and her inner *madness*, however much concealed, is betrayed in her face. *Fire* bursts forth through her *eyes*; her *weary sight* cannot bear the daylight. Nothing pleases her fickle mind for long, and her restless pain disturbs her body in various ways [...] there is not that same vigour, *not the ruddiness that coloured her glowing face*, love-care ravages her body, her steps are trembling, and the delicate beauty of her bright body has faded. [...] *Tears fall* across her face, her eyes are flooded with constant moisture, as on the ridges of Taurus the snows melt.)—Cf. also Kautzky (1989: 196).

¹² On Phaedra: Finkelpaerl (1998: 149–83), especially 161ff. on the entanglement of allusions in the story: Euripides, Seneca, but also Dido, and Ovid *Heroides* 4. Zimmerman (2000: 417–32): an even longer list of possible intertexts. Cf. also Kautzky (1989: 187ff.) for even more detail; Donnini (1981) for a comparison of different versions; and Tappi (1985) for a different approach. Fiorencis and Gianotti (1990=2000: 275ff.) point out the movement of the Phaedra story into other non-dramatic genres, whilst being demoted from a tragedy of princes to the mishaps of a provincial family.

¹³ A comprehensive list in Zimmerman (2000: 423 n. 37).

¹⁴ Cf. Watson (1995: 20–49) on stepmothers in Greek myth (usually tragedy), 105–8 on *Met.* 9 and 10; she sees the main influence on Apuleius' stepmothers in *declamationes*. But cf. below on *Met.* 10.23ff.

Furthermore, this story of the evil stepmother might be connected to Laberius' *Belonistria* mime (Bonaria (1955–6: fr. 22)), from which the following words are everything we have: 'domina nostra privignum amat efflictim' ('Our mistress passionately loves her stepson.'). Nothing much is known of this mime, and any similarity to Apuleius is highly speculative. Accordingly, *Met.* 10.2–12 has been analysed several times¹⁵ with the help of the *Oxyrhynchus* mime and the *Belonistria* fragment, and the story has been reconstructed as a mime plot, although scholars have raised difficulties at this point.¹⁶ As Zimmerman (2000: 425) rightly state: 'to see Apuleius' version as merely a mime rewritten in narrative form is a negation of the rich and varied literary tradition which [...] is incorporated in Apuleius' "Phaedra." Even the non-dramatic renderings of the *Phaedra* story are conscious of its tragic origin. When Quintilian criticizes the unreality of the subject matter of several declamations, he is conscious of the tragic subtext of Phaedra-esque *controversiae* when he refers to the characters as (*Inst.* 2.10.5) 'saeviores tragicis novercae' ('stepmothers more cruel than those of tragedy').

Despite the multivalence of the plot, tragedy is the foregrounded intertext, and only the second half of the story, the plot of the sleeping-draught and apparent death, resembles some popular mimes.¹⁷ I would like to argue that instead of trying to find one *single* genre resembling the story in Apuleius, we should accept that he aims at a metamorphosis or shift of genres in mid-story.¹⁸ In the first part, however, the prime intertext is certainly tragedy, and it is Senecan tragedy to which the closest verbal resemblances occur. This also fits the famous introduction to the tale at *Met.* 10.2 as a tragedy:

Iam ergo, lector optime, scito te tragoediam, non fabulam, legere et a socco ad cothurnum ascendere.

(You should know, gentle reader, that you are now to read a tragedy and no mere *fabula*; you are to rise from the comic sock to the tragic buskin; trans. adapted)

Since the story does not end like a tragedy with the death of the characters resembling Hippolytos and Phaedra, this statement has been seen as ironic,¹⁹ or

¹⁵ Reich (1903). On mime underlying various other genres: Fantham (1988–9).

¹⁶ Cf. Walsh (1970: 171); Heine (1978: 37) for a negative judgement on Apuleius. For reconstructions cf. e.g. Wiemken (1972: 139f.); Steinmetz (1982: 367–73). Andreassi (1997) warns against taking 10.2–12 as a mime plot. Cf. Zimmerman-de Graaf (2000: 425).

¹⁷ Fick-Michel (1991: 111) regards the changed ending of the *Phaedra* story as a concession to contemporary taste; note that these motifs also occur in the Greek novels.

¹⁸ For similar ideas of shifts, but not necessarily of a generic kind cf. the scholars quoted above in nn. 9 and 10.

¹⁹ Schlam (1992: 44):

This admonition turns out to be ironic. The situation and initial tone of the ensuing tale are those of tragedy, but the course of the action is diverted by the scrupulousness of the physician from whom the poison is sought and by the maintenance of orderly legal procedure. Comedy prevails, not in the theatrical sense of *fabula*, but in the sense of festive rebirth and renewal.

more sophisticatedly as Apuleius guiding our attention to the parallels with tragedy:²⁰ Apuleius misleadingly states he is writing tragedy to give prominence to that particular context so that the story is recognized as a tragedy with a different ending.²¹

To me it seems that Apuleius wants to indicate in *Met.* 10.2 that the narrator claims that hitherto he has been narrating a *fabula*, and here *fabula* as contrasted with *tragoedia* is undoubtedly used to represent the comic genre, as the reference to dramatic costume implies. Now a tragedy will be narrated, and the next few chapters indeed show a remarkable similarity with *Phaedra* tragedies. It is only after one of the characters, the doctor, does not comply with tragic convention and supplies a sleeping-draught instead of a deadly poison, that the genre changes into a farcical mime at a noticeable point of the plot.

Interestingly, textbooks of rhetorical theory condemn exactly this crossing of genres²² that Apuleius practises in his *Phaedra* story, with words that Apuleius seems to recall. Cicero argues for the clear distinction of genres in *Cic. Opt. Gen.* 1.1.: 'In tragoedia comicum vitiosum est et in comoedia turpe tragicum' ('in tragedy anything comic is flawed, and in comedy anything tragic is unsightly'). Quintilian agrees, with words remarkably similar to Apuleius': Quint. 10.2.22: 'sua cuique proposito lex: suus decor est: nec comoedia in coturnos adsurgit, nec contra tragoedia in soccos ingreditur' ('each genre has its own rules, each its own type of appropriateness: neither do comedies raise themselves into tragic boots, nor does tragedy walk along in comic slippers.'). Hor. *Ars* 93–8 grudgingly acknowledges the existence of the mixing of genres, but does not appreciate it (cf. 89: 'versibus exponi tragicis res comica non vult', 'a comic theme does not want to be set out in tragic verse'). Apuleius uses the same concept in *Flor.* 16, in a characterization of Philemon's style.²³

Apuleius emulates and corrects Quintilian in *Met.* 10.2. The novel as the genre absorbing all others (Bakhtin (1981)) can easily take in both comedy and tragedy, and allow them to mix, without appearing *turpe* or *vitiosum*. The *Metamorphoses* becomes a rhetorical exercise in the crossing of genres, which appears to be Apuleius' underlying structural principle—it is the same principle which allows the story of Charite to metamorphose from comedy into

²⁰ Zimmerman (2000: 68).

²¹ Further literature on this debated passage: Finkelpearl (1998: 151); Tatum (1979: 78); Scobie (1978: 54); James (1987: 236f.); Smith (1972=1999: 522f.), who interprets the 10.2 quotation as one of the misleading cues of the novel; Walsh (1970: 171). Zimmerman (2000: 417) sees the polyvalence of the plot.

²² 'Kreuzung der Gattungen': Kroll (1964), cf. also Bakhtin (1981) and Barchiesi (2001).

²³ Cf. Ch. 3.4 above.

tragedy, and the story of Psyche to turn from tragedy with comic undertones to outright comedy.

The Phaedra story suddenly switches from tragedy to comic mime without losing its coherence. This switch of genres can be paralleled in the second inset tale, which similarly suddenly switches from comedy to tragedy. The parallels between the two stories are obvious:²⁴ both include evil women, who obtain poison from doctors to kill their relatives. The first one encounters a 'good' doctor and thus tragedy does not ensue; the second one is 'luckier', finds an evil doctor, and kills five members of her family.

Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 10.23ff. and Menander

The story of 'Phaedra' has attracted much interest, but little notice has been taken of its companion piece, 10.23ff. I will now concentrate on the second family drama. When Lucius is in Corinth as the parasite of the rich Thiasus, an eccentric lady is much attracted to him, and the first reluctant, but then willing donkey sleeps with her in secret (*Met.* 10.19–22). His keeper realizes that he can make some money from Lucius' particular talent, and proceeds to display him in the public show that Thiasus stages in Corinth.²⁵ The respectable rich lady with her Pasiphaean tastes cannot be hired for this public display. Instead, they find a quintuple murderess who is condemned to death, and her punishment is to be achieved by the public display of the ass's skills in a fatal charade.

Before Lucius proceeds to tell what happened to him in the theatre at Corinth, he digresses in order to tell the story of this woman's crimes (*Met.* 10.23–8). This story consists of three different stories²⁶ linked to each other only by the presence of the same protagonist, the murderess. Of those inter-linked stories, it is the first one above all that concerns us here, and which should be quoted *in extenso*:

Maritum habuit [sc. the murderess], cuius pater peregre proficiscens mandavit uxori suae, matri eiusdem iuvenis—quod enim sarcina praegnationis oneratam eam relinquebat—ut, si sexus sequioris edidisset fetum, protinus quod esset editum necaretur. At illa, per abs[tin]entia<m> mariti nata puella,²⁷ insita matribus pietate praeventa descivit ab obsequio mariti eamque prodidit vicinis alumnandam, regressoque iam

²⁴ Complete list: Finkelpearl (1998: 152).

²⁵ On the salacious reputation of Corinth, especially for parallels to poisonous Medea and other dangerous ladies there: Mason (1971).

²⁶ Cf. van Thiel (1971–2: i. 147ff.); Junghanns (1932: 178 with n. 104); Perry (1923: 220), and the detailed analysis in Kautzky (1989: 250ff.).

²⁷ Thus most editors, *pace* Helm (1931); cf. the discussion in Zimmerman (2000: 298).

marito natam necatamque nuntiavit. Sed ubi flos aetatis nuptialem virgini diem flagitabat nec ignaro marito dotare filiam pro natalibus quibat, quod solum potuit, filio suo tacitum secretum aperuit. Nam et oppido verebatur, ne quo casu, calor is iuvenalis impetu lapsus, nescius nesciam sororem incurreret. Sed pietatis spectatae iuvenis et matris obsequium et sororis officium religiose dispensat et arc[h]anis domus venerabilis silentii custodiae traditis, plebeiam facie tenus praetendens humanitatem, sic necessarium sanguinis sui munus adgreditur, ut desolatam vicinam puellam parentumque praesidio viduatam domus suae tutela receptaret ac mox artissimo multumque sibi dilecto contubernali, largitus de proprio dotem, liberalissime traderet. (*Met.* 10.23)

(This woman had a husband whose father was to travel abroad. On his departure he instructed his wife, who was carrying the burden of pregnancy and was the mother of the young husband, that if she gave birth to a child of the weaker sex, the baby was to be killed at once. But when a baby girl was born in the absence of her husband, she was induced by the innate love which mothers have for their offspring to disobey her husband. She gave the girl to the neighbours to rear, and when her husband returned she told him that the baby was a girl and had been disposed of. But when the girl matured to her full womanhood, making it necessary that a date be set for her marriage, the mother could not bestow on her daughter the dowry appropriate to her birth without the knowledge of her husband. So she did the only possible thing: she revealed the hidden secret to her son, for she greatly feared that by some mischance he might succumb to the pressures of youthful ardour, and fall in love with his sister in the blissful ignorance which she shared. The young man was a model of family devotion; he scrupulously observed both obedience to his mother and his duty to his sister, and by hiding his motives behind an apparent display of common kindness, he discharged the duty demanded by the blood relationship. He admitted the girl into the protection of his home as if she were a neighbour abandoned and orphaned of the support of her parents, and later he entrusted her in marriage to a very close and much loved friend, bestowing on her a dowry most generously from his own pocket.)

This story, which reads like the plot-line of a comedy, is however followed by a distinctly uncomic disaster. The young brother's wife, who does not know that the young girl is her husband's sister, becomes jealous of her, and plans to murder her sister-in-law. She steals her husband's ring, goes to the countryside, and sends her devoted slave to the girl with the ring and a command to come to the country villa, but unattended. The girl obeys the supposed request of her brother, and the woman tortures her to death, despite the girl's cries that she is the sister, not the lover, of the woman's husband. Again, one person in the story does not comply to the generic stereotypes.

The murderous woman furthermore proceeds to kill her husband, the doctor who provided her with the poison to do so (*Met.* 10.25f.), her own daughter by her dead husband, because she cannot endure her being the

heiress to her husband's fortune, and finally the doctor's wife who foolishly asks her for payment for the lethal potion. Before the doctor's wife dies, however, she manages to inform a magistrate about the murderous woman's deeds, so that the latter is arrested and condemned to be killed in the theatre by wild beasts, *ad bestias* (*Met.* 10.27f.).

The first part of this story, the life of the girl up until her planned marriage, has been compared to the plot of Menander's *Perikeiromene* by Trenkner.²⁸ It is my purpose in this section to establish that Apuleius indeed uses a comic source, but not this particular play. Other genres, such as *declamatio*, will also have to be considered as possible sources. Once a derivation from comedy is accepted, it will have to be considered exactly which elements of comedy Apuleius used for his *novella*.

The *Perikeiromene* is not completely extant, but enough text remains to permit reconstruction. It is the (delayed) prologue of the goddess Agnoia, 'Misapprehension', which gives us the prehistory of the comedy.²⁹ The merchant Pataikos of Corinth exposes his twin children, Glykera and Moschion, soon after their birth, because his wife has died in childbirth and he has lost his fortune due to a shipwreck, both on the same day.³⁰ An old woman finds them, entrusts the boy to a wealthy woman and keeps the girl and the recognition tokens. When the children are grown up, she gives Glykera as a concubine to the soldier Polemon. Just before she dies, she gives Glykera the tokens and tells her of her origins, and that Moschion, who lives in the house next door, is her twin brother, for the following reason (*Men. Perik.* 137–43):

προνοουμένη τι τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων,
 εἴ ποτε δεηθείη βοηθείας τινός,
 ὁρώσα τοῦτον ὄντ' ἀναγκαῖον μόνον
 αὐτῇ, φυλακὴν τε λαμβάνουσα μή ποτε
 δι' ἐμέ τι τὴν Ἄγνοιαν αὐτοῖς συμπέσῃ
 ἀκούσιον, πλουτοῦντα καὶ μεθύοντ' ἀεὶ
 ὁρώσ' ἔκεινον,

(as precaution
 against some human tragedy, in case
 she ever needed help. She knew he was the girl's
 one relative, and wished to guard against

²⁸ Trenkner (1958: 93f.): where she argues that a hypothetical Greek novella underlies this story, she does not seem plausible to me, if we take the other comic material present in the *Metamorphoses* into account. Trenkner herself once modifies her claim for a Greek novella source: 'It would be rash to treat Apuleius' novella as a conception of the theme quite independent of comedy.' (p. 94).

²⁹ *Men. Pk.* 121–71, the first extant lines of the play.

³⁰ *Pk.* 372–6. Cf. Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 466f.).

some unintended hurt befalling them
 through me—I'm Misconception. She could see
 the boy was wealthy, always drinking. trans. Arnott)

Indeed, Moschion, not knowing that Glykera is his sister, falls passionately in love with her when he sees her standing outside her door, and embraces and kisses her. Glykera, knowing he is her brother, lets him do so. Unfortunately, this was seen, either by Polemon himself or, more likely, by his slave Sosias.³¹ Polemon, instigated by Agnoia, falls into a fury and cuts Glykera's hair off.

Then Agnoia leaves the stage, and the main action of the play continues, in the course of which Glykera flees to the house of Moschion and his foster-mother Myrrhine. Moschion and Polemon both assume that this action has taken place because Glykera has fallen in love with Moschion, and further misapprehensions occur. Finally, a paratragic recognition scene³² between Glykera and her father Pataikos, overheard by Moschion, solves the plot. Pataikos, overjoyed to be reunited with both his children, betrothes Glykera to the penitent Polemon.

Similarities between this comic plot and the plot-line of *Met.* 10.23–8 are evident. Trenkner³³ remarks that both scenes are set in Corinth; it is indeed unusual to set plays outside Attica. There are, however, several plays set in different locations: Menander's *Leukadia* was set on the island of Leucas, Diphilos' *Emporos* was set in Corinth (cf. fr. 31 K.–A.).³⁴ Plautine adaptations set in cities other than Athens include *Miles* (Ephesus) and *Curculio* (Epidaurus). Further similarities are the exposure of children at birth and the later disclosure of the secret to one of the grown-up children in order to avoid the threat of incest. Trenkner's³⁵ claim, however, that the comedy plot 'strikingly resembles' that of the *Metamorphoses*, is somewhat misleading.

On closer analysis,³⁶ there are striking differences. In Menander, twin children are exposed, because their father has lost his fortune and his wife in one day; in Apuleius, the one child is a girl and was to be exposed because of her sex. In Menander, the grown-up girl is told by her foster-mother about her origin, because she could then turn to her brother for help if in need, besides

³¹ Reconstruction: Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 467f.), Arnott (1979–2000: iii. 374–7).

³² Analysed in detail many times, cf. Zagagi (1994: 51ff.), with notes for further literature.

³³ Trenkner (1958: 93), followed by Mason (1978: 11).

³⁴ Thanks to Peter Brown for this reference.

³⁵ Trenkner (1958: 93). For a criticism of her misleading representation of the plot: Kautzky (1989: 260 with n. 167). James (1987: 236f.) points out that the motifs are familiar from New Comedy.

³⁶ Kautzky (1989: 260f.) points out the differences in the fathers' reasons, the different number of the children and the different persons who disclose the relationship to one of the siblings.

avoiding incest. In Apuleius, their mother tells her son about the exposed daughter because she needs his help for the dowry (though avoidance of incest plays a role in her thoughts, too). In Menander the grown-up children move into neighbouring houses only accidentally. Apuleius does not have the girl exposed but given to the neighbours to bring her up, and the boy is told about it because his chances of meeting the neighbours' daughter are rather high.

Minor points could be added: in Apuleius, the mother is still alive, and very likely the father, too,³⁷ while in Menander it is Glykera's foster-mother who has to further the plot by telling her about her true birth. The brother in Apuleius' text seems to be already married, while Moschion is not and is indeed very interested in his beautiful neighbour.

Trenkner prefers the view that both plots go back to a (lost and very hypothetical) Greek *novella*,³⁸ but she also considers that Apuleius could have used the play as a direct source. Here she is followed by Mason, who is generally sceptical about Apuleius' use of New Comedy as a source, but considers the *Perikeiromene* as a possibility.³⁹

Given these many differences between the two plots, however, a direct borrowing from this play seems to me unlikely. Kautzky, having dismissed any influence from Menander on the Apuleian story, proceeds to argue for a declamation as Apuleius' source, quoting Quint. *Decl. Min.* 306,⁴⁰ in which a man going on a long journey tells his wife to expose the child after the birth. The woman obeys and exposes the newborn boy child. After the father's death, a young man appears, says he is the exposed son and claims the inheritance for himself. Kautzky, like Trenkner, overstates his point, because there are not many similarities between his *declamatio* source and Apuleius' *novella*, either: for example, the child is to be exposed anyway, regardless of its sex, and there is apparently no other sibling involved in the story. Furthermore, the child is male, and not a daughter.

Kautzky tries to argue his point from a similarity in the phrasing: Apuleius writes 'maritum habuit, cuius pater *peregre proficiscens* mandavit *uxori* suae' ('This woman had a husband whose father was to *travel abroad*. On his departure he instructed his *wife*'), Pseudo-Quintilian 'maritus *peregre proficiscens* praecepit *uxori*' ('a husband who was to *travel abroad* commanded his *wife*'). The joining of *peregre* and *proficisci*, he claims, is mainly found in

³⁷ Cf. 'nec ignaro marito dotare filiam pro natalibus quibat' ('the mother could not bestow on her daughter the dowry appropriate to her birth without the knowledge of her husband'; *Met.* 10.23).

³⁸ Trenkner (1958: 93f.).

³⁹ Cf. Ch. 1 n. 13 above.

⁴⁰ Kautzky (1989: 261f.). On the minor declamations in general: Leo (1912b).

Pseudo-Quintilian's *declamationes*,⁴¹ and the formulaic *habuit* / *habebat* ('she / he had') at the introduction of a new story has parallels, too.⁴² In any case, of thirty-seven instances of *peregre* in Plautus, most indeed are combinations of this word with *venire* or *advenire* (in the case of people, mostly fathers, returning from a journey) or *vendere* (in the case of a girl being sold by the *leno*); there are however two occurrences of the juncture with *proficisci*, namely *Most.* 977 'postquam eius hinc pater *sit profectus peregre*' ('after his father had left here for foreign parts') and *Trin.* 149f.: 'Quoniam hinc *est profecturus peregre* Charmides, | thensaurum demonstravit mihi in hisce aedibus' ('because when Charmides was about to go away from here abroad, he showed me a treasure in this house'). Furthermore, the plot summary in Donatus of Terence's *Hecyra* uses precisely this phrasing: '[Pamphilus], quam *peregre profectus* cum reliquisset domi' ('when he left her at home and went abroad').⁴³

The phrase *uxorem habere* ('to have a wife') is more difficult, but not impossible, to parallel from comedy; the phrase occurs in Ter. *Phorm.* 941f., though not in a prologue or anywhere else at the beginning of a play. In that passage, however, Phormio embarks on the revelation of the truth in a narration of the family's prehistory similar to that given in Apuleius.⁴⁴

Linguistically, Kautzky's argument is thus not compelling. Furthermore, it is evident that many of the declamations take their themes from comedy, and thus may accidentally go back to the same generic source as Apuleius. Even Roman declamations were influenced by Roman and Greek New Comedy.⁴⁵ Greek elements occur in declamations, but were adapted by the Romans to their own way of thinking.

It is true that Apuleius as a rhetorician and lawyer may have taken a *declamatio* as his source, as he has clearly done in for example Book 9,⁴⁶ but it is equally likely that he, who has shown some familiarity with comedy in other passages of the *Metamorphoses*, actually uses Greek or Roman comedy for a source. All the individual motifs can be found in comedy.

⁴¹ He lists (p. 261), besides Suet. *Caes.* 42 as the only exception, *Decl. Min.* 335, *Decl. Mai.* 5, 16. It could be added that this phrase occurs ten times in the Elder Seneca. Other parallels are also listed in Zimmerman (2000: 296).

⁴² Kautzky (1989: 261) lists Apul. *Met.* 2, 23, 28 and Quint. *Decl. Mai.* 5, 6, 23 and *Decl. Min.* 256, 257, 291. *Rus proficisci* is also a standard term in comedy for exits and entrances on the Roman stage, cf. Vitruv. 5.6.8. The *senex* goes *rus profecta* at 5.24.

⁴³ Cf. Don. *ad Ter. Hecyr. praef.* ii.

⁴⁴ *Receptare*, which comes later in *Met.* 10.23, is archaic, found in comedy but avoided by classical authors (it resurfaces in the empire), cf. Callebat (1968: 141).

⁴⁵ Bonner (1949: 37); cf. p. 33–5 on Greek elements in Roman declamation.

⁴⁶ Harrison (2000: 224); Hijmans et al. (1995: 297) with further literature.

Declamationes are also linguistically inspired by comedy. Furthermore, since Apuleius uses dramatic elements throughout the whole of Book 10, a comic source is more easily integrated into the structure of this book: Chapters 2–12 give a conscious version of the Phaedra tragedy with an unexpected untragic ending, developing from tragedy to mime, and Apuleius here proceeds to do something very similar with the comic genre, developing an original comic plot into a tragic ending with a whole *oikos* ('household') extinguished.

The similar technique of introducing an unexpected ending untypical of the genre forms a neater contrast if a comic background is assumed. Zimmerman in her commentary⁴⁷ also points out the similarities to the plots of several Plautine or Terentian comedies, without however analysing these elements in detail.

Apuleius' use of comic language is in evidence throughout the whole of the *Metamorphoses*, but although the passage shows some affinity with comic language here, there is no use of a typically comic word: Kautzky and Zimmerman ad locc. list the following: 10.23: 'quod enim' ('for because') is likely to take up the Plautine 'quia enim' in Plaut. *Bacch.* 50, *Capt.* 884.⁴⁸ 'ubi ... flagitabat' ('as soon as he demanded'): the indicative imperfect with *ubi* is rare, but the same construction occurs in Plaut. *Bacch.* 685 'multum ... dilecto'—*multum* forming the superlative of adjectives is Plautine (*Aul.* 124).

Another indication of the link to comedy is the stress on *Fortuna*. Though the presence of this goddess is a constant leitmotif of ancient novels in general⁴⁹ and especially the *Metamorphoses*, I would like to argue that here *Fortuna* is employed pregnantly, as the patron goddess of comedy.⁵⁰ The last mention of this personified deity in the novel⁵¹ occurs when she interferes with the conclusion of the *novella*. In contrast to the *Tyche* (the Greek *Fortuna*) who in comedies ensures a happy ending, as for example in Menander's *Aspis*, where she even speaks the prologue, this *Fortuna* is directly responsible for the *novella* turning from one with a potential happy ending into a family tragedy, where she is supplanted by another abstract deity, the

⁴⁷ Zimmerman (2000: 303 and app. III).

⁴⁸ Callebat (1968: 534f.).

⁴⁹ Cf. Hägg (1983: 12, 86f.). The presence of *Tyche* in some Greek novels may also been inspired by comedy.

⁵⁰ Vogt-Spira (1992: 3ff. *et passim*) on the importance of *Tyche* for Menander's comedy.

⁵¹ *Met.* 10.24: 'Sed haec bene atque optime pleneque cum sanctimonia disposita feralem Fortunae nutum latere non potuerunt, cuius instinctu domum iuvenis protinus se direxit saeva Rivalitas' ('however, these most suitable arrangements so religiously made could not escape Fortune's deadly intent, for at her prompting, savage jealousy at once guided its course to the young man's house'). Zimmerman (2000: 18ff. and 304) compares *Fortuna*'s actions here with those in Greek tragedy, e.g. *E. Ion* 1512f.

otherwise unknown Rivalitas in 10.24. Other instances of personifications in Apuleius have been shown to be emulations of drama, and this may be another one.⁵²

Comic Motifs in 10.23ff.

More illuminating than the language is the use of comic motifs. Every single element in the story can be paralleled by examples from New or Roman Comedy. The list of parallels given here is not intended as exhaustive. The setting of the story can be analysed as a comic stage. As discussed above,⁵³ the stage of New Comedy consists of several houses, with exits to the agora or forum on one side and the countryside on the other one. The setting of this particular 'play' would involve two houses, namely the house of the brother and his murderous wife, and that of the neighbours, where the sister lives. Her intended husband would not have to have a house on stage in this hypothetical setting. An exit to the countryside is necessary for the intrigue that the murderous woman plans against her sister-in-law. The setting is thus in keeping with a *fabula*.

The *dramatis personae* in the *novella* read like the stock figures of a comedy: there are a young man, his father and mother, his jealous wife, a young freeborn girl as his sister (she is called *virgo*, which is also the noun applied to such young girls in comedies), the helpful neighbours who bring her up, the young husband's close friend who is to marry her (another *adulescens*), and finally a slave involved in an intrigue. Every one of these persons has parallels in the domestic setting of a New Comedy.

A husband's journey, for which he leaves his wife behind, occurs for example in Menander's *Samia*, Plautus' *Stichus* or Terence's *Hecyra* (cf. also *Met.* 9.17). The motif is not particularly connected with comedy (indeed, Odysseus and Agamemnon are prime epic and tragic examples), but has its *Sitz im Leben* in the Hellenistic and Roman period even for the middle classes. As such, however, it also occurs in comedy to start off the action of the comic plot.

The exposure of an unwanted child,⁵⁴ originally derived from tragedy and mythology,⁵⁵ occurs in a number of plays of New Comedy. The rearing of

⁵² Cf. Ch. 8.3 above.

⁵³ Cf. Ch. 7.3 above.

⁵⁴ It will have to be assumed that Apuleius' *necaretur* and *necatam* ('to kill') refer to the exposure of the child rather than to actively killing it, since that is the standard way of dealing with unwanted children.

⁵⁵ Tragedy: Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *Tyro*, Euripides' *Ion*, *Melanippe Desmotis* or *Alope* (very likely Menander's direct model for the arbitration scene *Epit.* 326ff.). On the topic in general: Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 34f.), with further literature, and p. 315 for the use of

foundlings also occurred in real life,⁵⁶ but in drama this has become a literary topos: our main evidence for the exposure of children and the raising of foundlings is taken from comedy: children are for example exposed and raised in Menander's *Perikeiromene*, *Heros*, *Georgos*, and *Epitrepontes*, Plautus' *Cistellaria* and *Casina*, and Terence's *Heautontimoroumenos*.

There seems to be little evidence for the exposure of children born in wedlock; an example is the baby in the *Epitrepontes*, but the exposure occurs without the father knowing, since the mother was the victim of rape before her marriage. The decision to raise the child rested with the father;⁵⁷ thus the husband in Apuleius was within his rights to command his wife to expose her child if it turned out to be female. When children within wedlock were exposed, they seem to have been largely girls. The main reason for this must have been the avoidance of the father's duty to provide a dowry for his daughter, cf. Poseidippos fr. 12 K.-A.: 'θυγατέρα δ' ἐκτίθησι (sc. πᾶς) κἂν ᾗ πλούσιος' ('everyone exposes a daughter, even though he is rich') or Ter. *Phorm.* 647 'inventast quae dotem petat' ('a daughter is found to claim her dowry').

Remarkably close is the plot in Terence's *Heautontimoroumenos*, an adaptation from Menander, where Sostrata was also told by her husband to expose her child if it was a daughter (626): 'meministine me esse gravidam et mihi te maximo opere edicere, | si puellam parerem, nolle tolli?' ('do you remember when I was pregnant and you gave me the strictest orders that if I gave birth to a girl, she was not to be reared?'). This is the closest resemblance in extant Roman comedy to this part of Apuleius' *novella*, since a married woman is to expose her child if it is a daughter, and does not do so. Sostrata instead gives the child to a foreign woman with some recognition tokens including a ring, and the daughter is duly recognized when adult.

Apuleius' plot does not feature an exposed young girl, but one given to a neighbour to raise. Not every recognition scene in comedy involves exposed children. Occasionally, the children are abducted at a young age (for example *Sikyonios*, *Menaechmi*, *Poenulus*, *Eunuchus*) or given to the neighbours to raise, if the mother does not want to expose her children. This occurs for example in Menander's *Phasma*, where the girl born out of wedlock is given to the neighbours by her mother, with the girl's identity kept secret, while she

tragedies within a comic argument. In the novels, it is notably Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, which uses New Comedy for several of its plotlines, where the couple are exposed at the beginning and recognized at the end of the novel.

⁵⁶ This is not the place to enter into the discussion about statistics for child exposure. Theories range from exposure, especially of girls, being very common, e.g. Harris (1982), to more critical analyses like that of Patterson (1985). Cf. also Golden (1981).

⁵⁷ Cf. Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 35), and Men. *Epit.* 135ff.

and her mother can visit each other through a hole in the wall between the neighbouring houses.

The avoidance of incest between brother and sister is also used in drama. In the famous arbitration passage from Men. *Epit.* (218–375), one of the arguing slaves brings up parallels from myths and tragedy for recognition tokens being important. Among other reasons, Syriskos argues that recognition tokens help prevent marriage between brother and sister.⁵⁸ There is no occurrence of this issue known from tragedy.⁵⁹ The avoidance of incest is, however, fully exploited in New and Roman comedy, most notably in the *Perikeiromene*, *Curculio*, and *Epidicus*.⁶⁰ In all three comedies, the brother falls in love with his sister but incest is ultimately avoided by timely recognition. The use of this motif in Apuleius' *novella* argues strongly for a comic source.

'Love' between neighbours is a recurring feature, too, for example in the *Samia*. Occasionally, it is the neighbour's daughter the young man falls in love with and, according to comic tradition, rapes. This is the case for example in Terence's *Adelphoe*. In Menander's *Heros*, too, the young neighbour rapes the daughter of the lady next door, perhaps taking her for a slave since the girl was given to a freedman to bring up and only ended up in her mother's house after the freedman's death. The motif of a neighbour raping a young girl (though less so the taking of measures to avoid this rape!) is too common in comedies to liken the story in Apuleius with that of the *Perikeiromene* exclusively.

Zimmerman argues⁶¹ that many exposed girls were brought up as prostitutes. This she assumes to be the case here, too,⁶² although her argument for a sinister meaning of *alumnari*, a word which according to *ThlL* is first attested in Apuleius, is not very strong. *Alumnus*, though it can have the meaning *servus*, is, as Serv. *Aen.* 11.33 states, *qui Graece τρόφιμος dicitur* ('what in Greek is called *trophimos*'). This is the term in Greek comedy for the young master of the house, and Plautus (Terence uses *erilis filius*) renders it *alumnus*: e.g. *Merc.* 809 '*erus atque alumnus tuos sum—salve, alumne*' ('I am the master

⁵⁸ Cf. Men. *Epit.* 341.

⁵⁹ Cf. Gomme and Sandbach (1973: ad loc.).

⁶⁰ It is to be noted, however, that for the Greeks a marriage between non-uterine half-brother and -sister was not considered as incest, and thus it may be that several other comedies ended quite unoffensively in the marriage between half-siblings. No comedy with this plot has so far been discovered (Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 108)), but one possible reconstruction of *Phasma* involves the marriage between half-brother and -sister (*ibid.* p. 674f.). *Epidicus* as a likely exception: Fantham (1975: 61 n. 40), who believes in the reworking of a Greek marriage between non-uterine siblings; differently Goldberg (1978: 82ff.), who argues for large-scale Plautine originality. Cf. Just (1989: 79) for a discussion of legally permissible incest between non-uterine siblings.

⁶¹ Zimmerman (2000: 299f.).

⁶² Evidence for this custom: Boswell (1988: 112), who does not discuss this story, although he knows it, since the child is not exposed.

whom you nursed.'—'Welcome, young nursling'), Plaut. *Cist.* 762 'nostra haec alumna est, tua profecto filia' ('she is our foster child, and certainly your daughter'). Fostering a child is usually expressed with *alere*: *Hec.* 671. This is the obvious meaning for *alumnari* to have here.

Furthermore the girl in Apuleius is, as already noted, not an exposed child, but given to the neighbours by her mother, and thus the consequences of child exposure do not apply to her. There is no reason why the mother should have wished to have her daughter brought up explicitly as a courtesan, which would eventually prevent the girl from making a legal marriage, a goal the mother certainly wants to achieve, as her decision to break her silence when the girl reaches marriageable age shows. Comedies feature matrons bringing up adopted daughters who are not prostitutes, for example the *Corinthia anus* of *Heautontimoroumenos* or, indeed closer to this plot, the neighbours in the *Phasma*, who take in the neighbour's daughter to educate, since the mother is otherwise not able to stay in close contact with her.

Marrying the sister off to one's best friend no doubt occurs in real life, and is also found in tragedy (Elektra and Pylades) and in comedy. One example is Menander's *Dyskolos*, where a double wedding between the two families involved in the comedy takes place at the end: Gorgias is conveniently married to Sostratos' own sister, to establish even closer links between the two families, although the latter two have not even seen each other yet.⁶³

A married woman may go to the countryside in a play. A marriage already in existence in comedy is usually unhappy (exceptions like the young couples in *Stichus* or the faithfulness of Pamphile in *Epitrepontes* prove the rule), especially in the generation of the parents of the hero and heroine. This facilitates temporary separation, and the absence of the wife enables the slaves or the young men (or indeed the old) to embark on an intrigue. Wives going to the countryside include the wife in the *Mercator*, who returns suddenly; Sostrata in the *Hecyra* offers to go to the countryside to avoid the accusations of jealousy to which she is subjected.

She might send her slave back to the city, as this murderous woman does, who sends a 'servulum sibi quidem fidelem, sed de ipsa Fide pessime merentem' ('a favourite slave, one faithful to her but deserving ill of the goddess Good Faith'), a good epithet for a *servus callidus* (*Met.* 10.24), with whom such puns are linked;⁶⁴ compare Palaestrio in *Mil.* 1370 who refers to himself as 'servorum praeter me esse fidelem neminem' ('no other servant except me is faithful to you!') at the moment when he starts to weave the intrigue.

⁶³ Gorgias and Sostratos have been friends for one day only, but to Sostratos at least this friendship seems to be very profound, cf. *Dysk.* 615f.

⁶⁴ Fraenkel (1922: 243ff.), Lodge (1904ff.) s.v. *fides vel sim.*

Women sending out slaves because they cannot go themselves also occur in comedy, for example in the *Menaechmi*. There is, however, no close parallel for a wife ordering another woman to join her in the countryside. Until this point in the story, no major deviation from a normal comedy plot is found; by then, the reader has been led to believe that s/he is reading a comic story. Especially given the positive outcome of the preceding *novella*, which moves from tragedy to a sudden farcical-comic ending, s/he is bound to expect the anagnorisis of the girl as a family member, which has not happened yet and is expected to be triggered by the ring and the meeting of the two women. The expectation is further enhanced by the renewed hint that only brother and sister know of their real relationship: 'hoc enim nomen [sc. fratris] sola sciebat' ('this relationship with him [sc. her brother] was known to her alone'; *Met.* 10.24).

Recognition of relatives by a ring is not restricted to tragedy. In one of the 'incest' comedies, *Curculio*, the sister recognizes her brother because of a ring, which helps to avert the catastrophe. In Ter. *Haut.* 624ff. Sostrata recognizes a ring and thus realizes she has found her daughter again, to whom she gave a ring as a recognition token. A ring as a recognition token features in several comedies involving the rape of a young girl, where the girl manages to take a ring from her attacker's finger, for example in the *Epitrepontes*, alternatively the rapist takes the girl's ring: Ter. *Hec.* 574.

The use of a ring by a family member to lure the girl to her death is a cunning choice on Apuleius' part, because a reader familiar with comedy will presume that the use of a ring as a token might lead to the final publicizing of the girl's true relationship to the young husband.

The comic wife is often needlessly jealous. In Plautus' *Rudens*, Daemones fears that his wife will be jealous without reason when he brings the two girls into his house (*Rud.* 1045ff.). In this case, the wife is jealous about young girls brought into her house, although one of them is later recognized as a relation.

A similar situation of jealousy arises in the *Mercator*, where the *senex* Demipho takes the girl his friend Lysimachus is infatuated with into his own house (*Merc.* 562ff. and 700ff.) and his wife becomes furious. A jealous wife going so far as to punish a young maid by beating her up is found in Menander's *Plokion*, the fragments of which are preserved by Apuleius' contemporary Gellius (frr. 296ff. K.-A.). Comedy has rightly suspicious wives, too: in the *Casina*, for example, the wife leads the action against her would-be unfaithful husband, just as Artemona in the *Asinaria* drags her husband away from the feast with the courtesan (851ff.).

The supplying of the girl with a dowry by her brother, 'largitus de proprio dotem' ('bestowing on her a dowry most generously from his own pocket';

Met. 10.23), deserves some closer inspection. In this passage Apuleius is not concerned with discussing a legal problem in all its intricacies, but sets the background for the adultery tale. Though no clear allusion to any particular law about dowry-giving is to be detected, some suggestions may be made. Kautzky in his commentary ad loc.⁶⁵ refers to Norden, who argues for Greek law here.⁶⁶ Although, as pointed out above, Greek law may appear in *declamationes*, too, Bonner shows that Roman law is more to the foreground in them.⁶⁷ The giving of a *dos* to the girl by her brother reflects Greek, not Roman custom. In Roman private law,⁶⁸ only fathers and grandfathers on the father's side had to provide girls with a dowry; brothers did not. Apuleius' young man, however, seems under a stronger obligation:

iuvenis et matris obsequium et sororis officium religiose dispensat [...] sic necessarium sanguinis sui munus adgreditur

(he scrupulously observed both obedience to his mother and his *duty to his sister* [...], and he discharged the *duty demanded by the blood relationship*.)

Apuleius stresses the young man's obligation to provide his sister with her dowry, as if there was no choice involved on his part. In Roman law, under certain circumstances a brother could become his sister's tutor, and the tutor's consent was needed for the promise of dowry.⁶⁹ This is, however, not the case here, since the brother cannot become the official tutor of a sister whose relationship to him is as yet unrevealed,⁷⁰ although the girl's legal situation as

⁶⁵ Kautzky (1989: 218).

⁶⁶ Norden (1912: 96 n. 6): 'An dieser Stelle handelt es sich indessen wahrscheinlich um eine bloße Übertragung aus dem Griechischen. Denn in Rom bestand nur die agnatische Dotationskraft des Vaters und väterlichen Großvaters, nicht des Bruders, während in Athen der Bruder neben dem Vater und Großvater diese Dotationspflicht besaß.'—On law in Apuleius: Summers (1967); Keulen (1997). On exaggeration and distortion and their comic potential in the representation of criminal law in the *Metamorphoses*: Elster (1991). The instances of distortion of legal customs that she lists indicate that Apuleius actually shows (and expects his readers to have) great knowledge of Roman private law, but that he should not always be taken at face-value as a source for our knowledge of Roman criminal law.

⁶⁷ Bonner (1949: 84–132). Cf. p. 89f. on 'rapta raptoris aut mortem aut indotatas nuptias optet' ('whether a raped girl wants the death of the rapist or a marriage without dowry'; cf. *Contr.* 1.5.3 etc.), which at first sight seems to reflect the situation in New Comedy, but can be paralleled by equally strong Roman evidence. Bonner concludes that the 'case for Greek originals is not as strong as might have been supposed.' (p. 107), cf. p. 131f.—Cf. generally Steinmetz (1982: 167–72) for a more critical approach to the fictitiousness of the laws in the *declamationes* and 188–92 for the *maiores declamationes*, all from the 2nd cent.

⁶⁸ Norden (1912) quotes relevant primary sources in his chapter on dowry, pp. 90–125 (not in Treggiari's bibliography).

⁶⁹ Watson (1971: 35, 40).

⁷⁰ On *tutela mulierum*: Watson (1971: 39–41). The brothers doing the *sponsio* ('pledge') for their sisters in *Trinummus* and *Curculio* are not their sisters' tutors: Watson (1971: 16).

an unrecognized family member is difficult to determine. As the father does not know about her existence, no one but the brother could supply a dowry. Also, in Roman society dowry-giving is merely customary in marriages: the marriage is legal without it, and the giving of a dowry is a social, not a legal matter.⁷¹ It is, however, given whenever possible.

In Greek law, the brother of an unmarried girl can become her *κύριος* (if their father is dead) and is normally required by law to equip his sister with a dowry.⁷² Furthermore, a marriage without dowry, although not strictly illegal, is extremely unusual in Attic society;⁷³ thus the mother's wish to provide a dowry for her daughter gains force in a Greek context, and the stress on the young man's duty to the girl due to their blood relation seems to express this kind of law. In Plaut. *Trin.* 690f. a brother is indignant at the bridegroom's offer to take his sister in marriage without dowry: 'me germanam meam sororem in concubinatum tibi, | si sine dote <dem>, dedisse magi' quam in matrimonium.' ('If I were to give my own sister to you without dowry I would give her into concubinage rather than into marriage.').

In Greek society it is usually the *kyrios* who gives the dowry, but third parties may also do so.⁷⁴ The brother is strictly speaking not the girl's *kyrios*, since her father seems to be still alive,⁷⁵ but no one else could supply her with the dowry, and in a Greek context, where a dowryless marriage reeks more of illegality than in Roman law, he might feel the obligation to do so more. Thus the generosity of the brother in the story can be understood as on the one side his duty from the viewpoint of the family members and of the reader who know about the blood-relationship, while on the other side the townspeople can assume that the young man performs for his young neighbour a good and magnanimous deed of altruism.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Cf. Watson (1971: 24) and the discussion in Treggiari (1991: 323ff.). However, she does not distinguish between Greek and Roman law being used in comedies and takes the example from *Trinummus* to be said in a Roman context. Cf. Vèrilhac and Vial (1998: 31) for marriage laws in New Comedy; Brown (1983: 414ff.) for careless portrayal of legal procedures in Menander and id. (1993) for marriage in New Comedy.

⁷² Although she is, strictly speaking, not exposed but given to the neighbours to bring up, it may be assumed that the same (Athenian) law as for exposed children would be valid for her: 'The legal tie between the exposed child, whether it was a legitimate daughter or a slave, and the father or master who exposed it remained and could be revived if the child later reappeared.' (Harrison (1968: 71)).

⁷³ Treggiari (1991: 323 with n. 2) describes a dowerless marriage as 'illegal', but Harrison (1968: 48f.) points out that there is 'evidence against the view that a dowry was an essential ingredient of a valid marriage.' The examples of dowerless marriages are, however, rather scarce.

⁷⁴ Harrison (1968: 48).

⁷⁵ Cf. n. 37 above.

⁷⁶ Cf. Zimmerman (2000: ad loc.) for this notion and an interesting parallel from Apuleius' own life.

Of course, Apuleius may have wanted to stress the brother's generosity in providing for his newly found sister and marrying her off to his best friend without having to do so by law. There may, however, be another reason for the inclusion of this element in the novel: the giving of dowries by brothers as *kyrioi* to sisters is the usual practice in Greece, and it occurs often at the end of a comedy, both Greek and Roman. Gorgias in the *Dyskolos*, for example, gives his half-sister and sister by adoption a dowry when she marries Sostratos, who has recently become his friend. In the Roman adaptations one can also find this particularly Greek custom—for example in Plaut. *Trin.* 508f. The need to give a newly found sister a dowry might also lie behind Chremes' suspicions and fears about Thais posing as such in Ter. *Eun.* 524ff.

There is no reason for somebody with knowledge of Roman law like Apuleius to depict a typical Greek custom in his novel if it had not already been in the source or genre of his story. It is thus very likely that he used comedy or comic material, where such a custom is frequently portrayed.

Apuleius is careful to leave in the plot elements which are absolutely necessary to identify his *novella* as a comedy plot. His reader is left with enough to expect the usual outcome of a comedy of this kind—that is stock characters, recognition of a long-lost relative, the recognized girl's marriage with a suitable young man, and her re-introduction into the family after her true relationship to the family has been made public. Then he sets out to perform his usual play with the reader's literary expectations, going much further than he has done before: he turns his plot into a tragedy, by having his heroine murdered by a member of her family. Before that, he even allows some false prolepsis by the use of a ring to be sent to the girl by her sister-in-law, a usual recognition token in comedy.

Recognition can lead to a tragic outcome, as for example in Euripides' *Alope*,⁷⁷ but details such as the provision of a dowry do indeed point to comedy rather than tragedy. Comedies sometimes have a tragic parplot, a plot in which the recognition scene does not happen in time and irrevocable damage occurs. The turn from comedy into tragedy as here, or from tragedy with a bad ending to one with a good one occurs precisely through the placing of the *anagnorisis*.⁷⁸ Apuleius exploits the possibility of *anagnorisis* leading to a bad ending here, similarly to his overstepping the generic rules in the 'tragedy' which precedes this 'comedy', where the deaths of all the family members are fake.

⁷⁷ *Alope*, the daughter of Kerkyon of Eleusis, is raped by Poseidon. Her son Hippothoon is exposed, and when he is brought before the king with his recognition tokens, Kerkyon arrests *Alope*, starves her to death and exposes the child again.

⁷⁸ Cf. Arist. *Po.* 10–13.

Wehrli argues that an *anagnorisis* in (Greek) comedy is often included to minimize the impression of cruelty the intrigue would otherwise have: because the girl is freeborn, a recognition can soften the smarting hearts of the unsuccessful suitors, since they win a sister or daughter instead of a mistress.⁷⁹ Another function is *ethopoia*, the depiction of a loving young woman, who deserves to be recognized and married to a respectable young man.⁸⁰

The function in Apuleius' plot seems to be different: the girl is never publicly recognized as a member of the family, since her true birth is apparently still to be kept secret after the marriage. Apuleius takes the beginning of his own story from the bare outlines of a plot and forms something very different from it by the addition of tragic elements. The fact that the girl is actually a member of the jealous woman's family and the abortive recognition scene enhance the sense of cruelty in the story.

The 'Source'

After it has been established that the material in Apuleius is indeed comic, there are several possibilities open for his source. If he worked directly from a comic source, he may have used an unknown Greek comedy, or a Roman adaptation, now lost but still available to him. On the other hand, Apuleius could have worked from a summary of a comic plot which he found in a prologue, scholium, commentary etc. Finally, he could have accumulated comic plot elements and stock figures into a comedy plot himself, that is, he could have composed this *novella* as a prose comedy, using available elements, but not going back to one single source comedy written by a Greek or Roman comic poet.

This last assumption cannot be abandoned straight away. Throughout the *Metamorphoses* and his other works, Apuleius shows considerable knowledge of comic stock situations and characters as well as ability to manipulate them; in the *Apologia* he has shown that he can construe his own comic plot around the family of his opponent in court. Furthermore, he claims in *Flor.* 9 that he himself has written comedies in Greek and Latin.⁸¹

This assumption, however, seems unlikely to me for the following reasons. Above all, there are certain unexpected breaks in his story. We never hear of the siblings' parents again, although they might conceivably still be alive. This is remarkable, given that the murderous woman's attempt to eliminate the whole family does not include them. Since the girl is called 'desolatam' and

⁷⁹ Wehrli (1936: 35–9).

⁸⁰ Examples stem mainly from Menander and his Roman adaptations: Wehrli (1936: 42–5).

⁸¹ Cf. Ch. 3.5 above.

'parentumque praesidio viduatam' ('abandoned and orphaned of the support of her parents'), the girl's foster parents, the neighbours, are apparently dead.⁸² This necessary detail would explain why the young man has to take his sister into his own house whilst her marriage to his friend is being arranged, but is nevertheless hinted at only implicitly. Apuleius also does not explain why the young brother, who seems to be married already and is portrayed besides as a paragon of virtue, is not to be trusted by his mother not to rape the neighbours' daughter.

It seems to me that these omissions in the story line derive rather from the adaptation of an independent source into the *novella* story. Furthermore, the parallelism to the Phaedra story is neater when one accepts a known comedy as the source for Apuleius' story. The breaks in the plot would not be so noticeable if the original source were known and the story could be inferred from outside knowledge.

This leaves the adaptation of a comedy in either language or the adaptation of a summary as possibilities. Ancient summaries of comedy are available, and indeed they sound similar to what Apuleius presents us with. Donatus, writing in the fourth century AD, provides a concise summary of, for example, Menander's *Phasma*,⁸³ a play which also occurred on the Roman stage in an adaptation by Luscius of Lanuvium, Terence's arch-enemy: Ter. *Eun. prol.* 9: 'idem Menandri Phasma nunc nuper dedit' ('the same man recently gave us Menander's *Phasma*').

It has some similarities with Apuleius' plot, insofar as a woman (who has conceived a girl out of wedlock) hides her daughter at the neighbour's house, from where the girl comes to visit her secretly through a hole in the wall between the two houses. Her stepson⁸⁴ sees the girl, falls in love with her, and finally marries her. From Turner's reconstruction⁸⁵ of the play itself, based on the surviving papyrus fragments, it is evident that this summary is very fragmentary. There is at least a second young man, and a second girl not mentioned by Donatus, with the possible issue of incest between full siblings having to be avoided.⁸⁶ Furthermore, the apparition, eponym of the comedy, appears quite early on and occupies much of Donatus' summary. Turner also argues that the prologue, of which we seem to have remnants, was spoken by a

⁸² A similar death in comedy: the situation in Terence's *Andria*, where the death of the 'sister' leaves the girl (who will be recognized as a citizen later) without protection.

⁸³ Cf. Don. *ad Ter. Eun. prol.* 9 and the reconstruction of the *Phasma* by Arnott (1979–2000: iii).

⁸⁴ Donatus calls her *noverca*, stepmother.

⁸⁵ Cf. Turner (1969: *passim*), and his edition of P.Oxy. XXXVIII.2825 of the papyrus fragments.

⁸⁶ Cf. the several reconstructions offered by Turner (1969); Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 673ff.).

semi-divine being not unlike Agnoia in the *Perikeiromene*, to fill in the audience on the details that no one else could have known.⁸⁷ Donatus in his summary ignores characters who were perhaps not mentioned in the prologue but only appear in the play proper. It seems to me that Donatus for his summary may have used little more than the narration of the prehistory of the comedy found in this divine prologue.

My summary of the *Perikeiromene* prologue above illustrates the type of information found in the prologues. In Apuleius, too, the temporal difference of some fifteen years (the time the young girl would need to grow up) cannot be covered in a comedy proper, but would be illustrated in the background information provided by a prologue. The part of Apuleius' *novella* which deals with the bringing up of the girl is very blandly narrated, without any elaboration, as a summary of a prologue would be. Even when Apuleius becomes much more wordy and rhetorical⁸⁸ after the mother's telling her son about his sister, and when he deals with the efforts of the young man in providing his sister with a dowry, this could echo part of a prologue. The one sentence 'Sed pietatis . . . liberalissime traderet' (see p. 276 above), rendering all the young man's efforts, from obeying his mother to taking the girl into his house, finding her a husband, and providing her with a dowry, could contain the background as indicated in some divine prologues. For example, Pan in the *Dyskolos* sums up very briefly what has happened before the comedy, namely that a young man has fallen in love with the girl under Pan's protection (ll. 39–45), and then concludes with (l. 45f.):

ταῦτ'] ἐστὶ τὰ κεφάλαια, τὰ καθ' ἑκάστα δὲ
ᾧψεσθ'] ἐὰν βούλησθε

(That]'s the synopsis. Now [you'll see]
the details, if you like; trans. Arnott)

Pan does not disclose the plot of the play, and Apuleius' summary is also far too short to display the intrigues and complications which would have formed the body of a comedy and which would have given it its distinctive character.

Very briefly, plot summaries as given before the plays in some manuscripts should be considered. Metrical plot summaries or *periochae* were added to Plautus' and Terence's plays in the second century AD by the school of C. Sulpicius Apollinaris⁸⁹ who came from Carthage and was the teacher of

⁸⁷ Turner (1969: 321), comparing *Pk.* 10.—On divine prologues in Menander cf. the discussion in Zagagi (1994: 143ff.).

⁸⁸ Analysis in Kautzky (1989: ad loc.).

⁸⁹ Cf. Brown s.v. 'argumentum' in *OCD*; Deufert (2002: 228); the acrostic Plautine *argumenta* are more recent (ibid. 386ff.).

Gellius. They contain very short but on the whole faithful summaries of the plot of the comedies proper and are not much concerned with the prehistory of the plays.⁹⁰ Apuleius, by contrast, concentrates on the prehistory of the story in his plot summary.

Terence famously abolished the prologues, divine or otherwise, of his originals, and replaced them with an *extra fabulam* prologue in which he justifies his own method of adaptation. The plot of the play proper must then have contained some additional surprises for his audience. All of Terence's plays are extant; none of them can be seen as a direct source of Apuleius, which coincides with his overall reluctance to use Terence.

Plautus does have some prologues explaining the prehistory of the play and hinting at the end of the comedy. In the *Menaechmi*, for example, a recognition comedy involving male twins, the *prologus* narrates the whole prehistory leading to the loss of one of the brothers, their growing-up and the search of one of them for the other (17–48) up to the moment that the twin looking for his brother arrives in Epidamnus and the play begins (70f.). In the reworked prologue of the *Casina*, the recognition scene, which is not acted out on stage, is narrated, since the farcical plot of the play proper stops before it can take place.⁹¹ This prologue, again, mentions the prehistory and the end, but does not refer to the intrigues which constitute the body of the play.

It seems to me that the story, as Apuleius represents it, is not a summary of a comedy proper, but the narrative introduction to a comedy, such as could be found in a prologue: not only do the bare outlines remain, but there are also some breaks in the plotline which could derive from the fact that the whole plot is not revealed in this kind of prologue. A bare summary also does not allow the recognition of any typically Plautine features, which usually do not interfere with the plot structure at such a basic level. It is very possible that Apuleius may have used a prologue either of a Greek or of a lost Roman comedy for his *novella*, since it displays exactly the same features.

In conclusion, whether Apuleius' direct source is a Greek or a Roman comedy is indeterminable as far as our extant evidence goes. Apuleius, as argued above in Chapter 2, had more Plautine comedies at his disposal than have been transmitted to modern times, a lost one of which could be the source. Furthermore, he also knew plays by Caecilius,⁹² a younger Roman adaptor of Menander. On the other hand, he could easily have used a Greek

⁹⁰ e.g. the complicated story of Glycerium in the *Andria*, who halfway through the plot turns out not to be the sister of the courtesan Chrysis, but a lost daughter of Chremes, is only referred to as 'Sororem falso creditam meretriculae' ('the girl falsely believed to be the sister of the courtesan'; *periocha* 1).

⁹¹ Exposure of the girl: 39ff.; recognition as a freeborn citizen: 79–83.

⁹² Cf. *Apul. Apol.* 5.

original similar to the *Perikeiromene* or even more similar to the *Phasma* in several respects.

Drama in the Inset Tales

The two inset tales of *Met.* 10 are thus a tragedy with a comic subplot and a comedy with a tragic ending.⁹³ Furthermore, it is a similar list of dramatis personae who act out the two stories.⁹⁴ Finkelpearl comments on the striking namelessness⁹⁵ of the characters in book 10. The only named person is Thiasos, all others are described either through their professions (soldier, cooks, doctors) or their family relations. This namelessness in the two parallel stories not only simplifies the comparison of the two plots, it is also to a certain extent reminiscent of the idea of stock characters in comedy. This facilitates also the realization of the similarity, even interchangeability, of the tragedy and the comedy plot up to the moments when the—either false or very genuine—deaths occur.

In both tales, the dramatis personae of the family drama are similar: a decidedly bourgeois family⁹⁶ with an evil wife who plans to ruin the whole family, not succeeding in the first tale, but killing five in the second. Incest (stepmother and stepson, or brother and sister) is ultimately to be avoided. Both tales feature slaves and doctors besides the nuclear family, and the second, corrupt, doctor looks back to his more scrupulous predecessor in the 'Phaedra' story. In both instances, *Fortuna* has a hand in the plot, though *Rivalitas* is the main agent in the second story once the comic plot is finished.

Zimmerman (2000: 442) argues that in 10.4 the stepmother changes from a tragic character into one from the novel, mime, and declamation once she proceeds to buy the poison instead of hanging herself like her tragic forerunners. Similarly, in the second story, the wife does not act as expected: instead of using a ring as a recognition token as might be assumed in comedy, she uses it to send the girl to her death.⁹⁷ In either case, the change between genres is

⁹³ Briefly alluded to by Mason (1999: 109). On the generic shifts of the inset tales: Zimmerman (2000: 440–4).

⁹⁴ Winkler (1985: 15): 'substantially the same cast of characters acts out variations on a theme.' Cf. Kautzky (1989: 278–85) for a rhetorical analysis, which does not take account of the genres.

⁹⁵ Names in the *Metamorphoses*: Brotherton (1934); Hijmans (1978b). Finkelpearl (1998: 157ff.) attributes a different significance to the namelessness of the characters.

⁹⁶ Even the 'Phaedra' story retains no trace of mythology, cf. Fiorencis and Gianotti (1990=2000).

⁹⁷ Zimmerman (2000: 443).

sudden, unexpected, and due to the action of one single character. The separating line between different genres is thin and fluid.

Zimmerman does not comment on the theatricality of all the genres involved. Indeed, when the novel changes from being a comic-realistic adaptation of a Greek picaresque novel into a salvation narrative in Book 11, the imagery remains dramatic. In the imagery of changing dramatic genres with their unexpected endings Apuleius finds not only a dramatic simile for the life of Lucius, a symbol of metamorphosis, as it were, but also a working image for the generic development of his novel.

The episodes of Charite and Psyche, similarly, display a change of genres half way through the stories. Nothing is quite as it seems in the *Metamorphoses*; even the genres metamorphose constantly, from a Senecaesque tragedy to a farcical mime, from a Menandrian comedy to a family tragedy, and, finally, even a comic novel may have an ending reminiscent of tragedy.

11.3. THE MAIN NARRATIVE: 'MILES GLORIOSUS' AND 'COOKS'

Miles gloriosus

Since the merging of genres has been established for the two inset tales, it remains to analyse whether there is a corresponding element of the crossing of dramatic genres in the main narrative of Book 10.

At the end of Book 9, Lucius re-enters the story as a more active participant; he stops being the passive audience of *Cupid and Psyche*, of Charite's tragic end, and of the adultery tales which form Book 9, and takes centre stage in his story once again. His current owner, the poor gardener (*hortulanus*), on his way home from work meets a soldier (*Met.* 9.39), who, offended at the gardener's lack of knowledge of the Latin with which the soldier addresses him, wants to confiscate Lucius from him. The *hortulanus*, however, manages to strike down his attacker, runs off with his donkey, and hides in a friend's house.

This new character, the soldier, has generally been recognized as a comic braggart soldier: Hijmans et al. (1995: 322) give a sweeping characterization of the soldier as a *miles gloriosus*:

he brags a little, certainly is overbearing, is subsequently knocked down by a ruse and takes a heavy beating and returns to his company a shadow of his former self.

They continue to suggest mime material as the source here, rather than comedy. There is, however, no reason to assume this. As will be seen when dealing with the portrait of the soldier in Book 10, there are parallels between Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus*, the beginning of which Apuleius quotes verbatim in *Socr.* 145, and Apuleius' text. The soldier recalls Pyrgopolynices from Plautus' play directly. There is, however, a difference in characterization. Crucially, certain elements of the comic *miles gloriosus* are missing:⁹⁸ in the end in Book 10, unlike in the carnivalesque Plautine comedy, the soldier does win, and the honest gardener will be killed. The soldier in Plautus receives just punishment for his bragging, but Apuleius' soldier is sent to Rome with a message, unharmed. Soldiers in comedy sometimes threaten to leave the city and take the girl, who is another young man's love interest, with them, so that an intrigue is spun to rescue her from him and prevent her from leaving the country (for example *Pseudolus*). This soldier, on the other hand, would like to leave Lucius behind.

The soldier's rank has caused some confusion for the commentators, since the staff he carries in 9.39 would characterize him as a centurion, and scholars doubt that this high rank is plausible.⁹⁹ The soldier is rather a comic stock type and not a portrait of a real-life soldier. The lack of realism is evident. Instead of arguing over the rank the soldier might hold in the army, or even taking this passage in Apuleius as a criticism of Roman soldiers' loutish behaviour in the provinces, as some scholars do, the soldier should be seen as a representative of a literary type from comedy with little or no resemblance to reality.¹⁰⁰

When the *miles* attempts to beat up the *hortulanus*, the *hortulanus* strikes back. As Millar notes,¹⁰¹ the gardener has apparently not read the contemporary Epictetus *Diss.* 4.1.79, where it is explicitly stated that one should give up one's ass to a soldier in order to avoid a beating. It is, however, the soldier who receives a beating from the rather non-martial *hortulanus*, and threatens weakly and vainly that, if only he could get up again, he would strike him with his sword (*Met.* 9.40) and reduce him to pulp: 'sese concisurum eum machaera sua frustatim' ('if he got back on his feet, he would cut him into little pieces with his sword'). The gardener overwhelms him, though, and takes the soldier's sword away with him. This is reminiscent of the end of Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus*, where the soldier also gets a good beating from an unlikely

⁹⁸ For the stock type: Hanson (1975). Fick-Michel (1991: 114), too, argues that the soldier resembles a *miles gloriosus*, but points out that his impudence is never punished. Cf. also May (1998: 148).

⁹⁹ Millar (1981: 67 n. 25); Hijmans et al. (1995: 32).

¹⁰⁰ Zimmerman (2000: 199) combines Millar's (1981) positivistic position with a (different) generic interpretation.

¹⁰¹ Millar (1981: 67 with n. 26).

source, a group of slaves, and similarly loses his *machaera* (as well as his army garments): *Mil.* 1423: 'de tunica et chlamyde et machaera ne quid speres, non feres' ('as for your tunic and cloak and sword, have no hopes about them: you will not carry them home').

Unlike the soldier in the *Onos* (44), he does not fight back. He is made even more of a useless braggart than his Greek equivalent. This is in line with the portrayal of soldiers in Roman comedy in comparison with the Greek originals, which generally show them as less farcical than the Roman *militēs gloriosi*. Plautus' Pyrgopolynices has similar fond fantasies of his own valour (l. 5f.): 'machaeram . . . quae misera gestit fartem facere ex hostibus' ('my poor sword, which desires to make mincemeat out of my enemies'). The term *machaera* for sword instead of *spatha* (used later in Apuleius' story) is unusual, but does occur in comic contexts¹⁰² and is part of the general equipment of a comedy soldier.

The siege of the house of the friend of the *hortulanus*, where he and his donkey go into hiding after the battle with the soldier, is the only element in the soldier's characterization which has hitherto not been seen in connection with his *miles gloriosus*-character. There may however be a similarity to a Terentian comedy, the *Eunuchus*. In it, the soldier Thraso lays siege to the house of the courtesan Thais (*Eun.* 771–816). Obvious verbal parallels are absent, but similarities in the plotlines can be detected: both soldiers lay siege to a house and want what they claim as their property returned, and in both cases (Pamphila, the unrecognized free Athenian maiden in *Eunuchus*, Lucius in Apuleius) the soldiers' claims to rightful ownership are fragile at best. The soldier in Apuleius even turns to a straightforward lie, namely that the *hortulanus* had appropriated a pot of silver that belonged to the soldier. Neither soldier fights his own fight; cowardice (characteristic of the aptly named Thraso) drives both to let other people do the fighting for them, namely the motley army of cooks and parasites in the comedy, and, more juridically, the magistrates sent for by the soldier's friends in Apuleius. It is in the outcome, however, that the stories differ—in Terence the soldier has to abandon the siege unsatisfied and defeated: the soldier in Apuleius successfully manages to claim the donkey for himself and very likely will also manage to have the *hortulanus* executed, but only after a rather farcical and at first futile search of the house and an incidental betrayal of the gardener through his donkey (9.42). The soldier in *Onos* 45 is less farcical; the house is searched only once, and successfully at that.

¹⁰² Cf. Hijmans et al. (1995: 334). On *machaera* as the typical equipment of the Plautine soldier cf. Hofmann in Hofmann and Wartenberg (1973: 92).

Although the story itself occurs in the *Onos*, there are several differences in tone.¹⁰³ The *Onos* concentrates mainly on the feelings of Loukios, and the soldier is less unpleasant (and as I would like to suggest, less Plautine and comic) than the *miles* in Apuleius. The portrayal of the soldier as a *miles gloriosus* is thus, as often in the *Metamorphoses*, an intentional Apuleian addition.

In Book 10, the *miles* reappears, again obviously shaped after the Plautine *miles gloriosus*, as also pointed out by Zimmerman on the relevant passages:¹⁰⁴ in 10.1 he is immediately reintroduced with Plautine words: ‘*miles ille, qui propter eximiam impotentiam pulcherrime vapularat*’ (‘the soldier, who had endured at his hands such a gratifying beating for his excessive aggression’): both *pulcherrime* and *vapularat* are Plautine (for example *Mil.* 404).¹⁰⁵ The most obvious reminiscence of Plautus’ braggart soldier, however, is found in the description of the luggage Lucius has to carry (*Met.* 10.1):

Nam et galeam nitore praemicantem et scutum gerebam longe praelucens, sed etiam lanceam longissimo hastili conspicuam, quae scilicet non disciplinae tunc quidem causa, sed propter terrendos miseros viatores [...] ad instar exercitus sedulo composuerat.

(I carried a helmet which gleamed brightly, a shield which glittered still further afield, and also a lance with a notably long shaft. He had carefully set these on top of his high-piled baggage as though he were serving with the army on campaign; not, I imagine, because this conformed with battle-orders at the time, but in order to terrorize wretched travellers.)

This recalls Pyrgopolynices’ speech from the beginning of the *Miles Gloriosus*, 1ff., a passage Apuleius knows well:¹⁰⁶

Curate ut splendor meo sit cluideo clarior
quam solis radii esse olim quom sudumst solent
ut, ubi usus veniat, contra conserta manu
praestringat oculorum aciem in acie hostibus.

(Make sure that the splendour of my shield is brighter than the rays of the sun which tend to outshine the clear sky, so that, when it needs to be used in the thick of combat, it dazzles the eyesight in the battle with the enemies.)

Apuleius’ soldier, however, is mischievously, and rightly, characterized as a coward by the donkey, who for once manages to see through the soldier’s

¹⁰³ Cf. Hijmans et al. (1995: 346); Zimmerman (2000: 197) on the closeness of some of the passages to the *Onos* in 10.13.

¹⁰⁴ Zimmerman (2000: 52–4, 56, 59, 199).

¹⁰⁵ On *vapulo* (‘to suffer blows’): Callebat (1968: 38f.). The next Apuleian sentence contains *prorsum* (‘thoroughly’), another Plautine form: Callebat (1968: 537); Zimmerman (2000: 54).

¹⁰⁶ Cf. also Ch. 3.2 above.

pretence; Plautus' soldier at least claims that his shield's shininess is to blind the army of enemies he intends to fight, while Apuleius' never intends the shininess of his weapons to blind his enemies in battle, and only to deter humble wanderers like the *hortulanus* who might beat him up,¹⁰⁷ and thus is portrayed as even more of a coward than the bragging Pyrgopolynices.

Another instance of comedy is Apuleius' wordplay on the languages spoken. The *Metamorphoses* are written in extravagant Latin, but the scene is Greece. Consequently, the *hortulanus*, just like his equivalent in the *Onos*, does not know Latin: *Met.* 9.39 'at meus, adhuc maerore permixtus et alias Latini sermonis ignarus, tacitus praeteribat' ('My master was still distracted with grief, and in any case did not understand Latin, so he tried to pass without replying.'). The soldier then replies in Greek ('ergo igitur Graece subiciens miles: "ubi", inquit, "ducis asinum istum?"'), ('So the soldier questioned him in Greek: "Where are you taking this ass of yours?"'), but the text Apuleius writes is a combination of Plautine¹⁰⁸ and non-classical Latin, possibly a deliberate late idiom or colloquialism, *ubi* instead of *quo*.¹⁰⁹

Then the soldier continues to use Plautine language: 9.39 probably has a Plautine tone: 'Sed mihi, inquit, opera[e] eius opus est' ('"Well, I need this beast's help", said the soldier') recalls *Mil.* 766 'mihi opus est opera tua' ('I need your help')¹¹⁰ and other Plautine instances.¹¹¹

In *Onos* 45, the soldier, too, first speaks Latin, and then Greek, but there is no direct quotation of what he says in either language. The first explicitly native Latin speaker the reader encounters in Apuleius' Latin novel at all, then, is somebody who speaks Plautine Latin, who is a Plautine *miles gloriosus* in a Greek context, and who in the end is sent to Rome. This may recall the prologue of the *Metamorphoses*, which also plays with the *prologus*' insufficient knowledge of Latin and the issue of translation from Greek—a passage, as we have seen, which recalls the prologues of Roman comedies and other linguistic games of Plautine comic adaptations and plays with the Greekness and Romanness of the characterization. Apuleius, I would like to argue, here points out the Roman ancestry of his literary type, as an addition to the original soldier of the lost Greek original.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Zimmerman (2000: 56), and 55 for the discussion of the passage's text—I only partly follow that of Helm (1931) as suggested in his *addenda*.

¹⁰⁸ On *ergo igitur* cf. Keulen (2003a: 147) with further reference.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Hijmans et al. (1995: 326f.); Callebat (1968: 196); Leumann, Hofmann, and Szantyr (1965–79: ii. 277) on the phenomenon.

¹¹⁰ Callebat (1968: 524f.) calls this a 'Scène de ton "comique"'; I accept Oudendorp's emendation because of the Plautine parallels, *pace* Hijmans et al. (1995: 327).

¹¹¹ Adams (2003: 383), cf. also 414 and 560f., sees the soldier's use of Latin as an aggressive expression of his superiority.

Apuleius' soldier then, out-herods Herod in several respects, but only subtly: he is more obviously a coward than the comic soldiers known from the *palliata*, perhaps with the exception of Terence's Thraso, and more importantly does not get his just deserts in the end, as does the *miles gloriosus* in Plautus. This is, however, not a criticism of Plautine comedy, as Fick-Michel argues,¹¹² but rather, as has been seen time and again in the course of this book, a typically Apuleian technique: again he has created expectations of a certain development of the action according to a stock type from comedy which he enhances in comparison to both the *Metamorphoseis* and the *Onos*, and again he disappoints, or rather misleads, his readers. This technique will become even more apparent in the latter parts of Book 10.

The reader of comedy will expect the soldier to be punished some time in the story for his cowardice and dishonesty. Instead, he is sent off to Rome, and the *hortulanus* is likely to be executed, an ending of the story completely alien to carnivalesque comedy, which recalls rather the unexpected endings of the inset tales in Book 10, and transposes their play with genre expectations and unexpected endings on to the plane of the main 'real' narrative of Lucius' story.

With Lucius entering the soldier's service, Lucius becomes once again a parasite, this time the sycophantic parasite of a soldier, and thus resumes a status that he held before his metamorphosis into an ass. After yet another change of ownership which will last until his re-metamorphosis, he will be explicitly called a parasite (*Met.* 10.13ff.). Comic soldiers are often accompanied by this particular stock character (for example Artotrogus in *Miles*), and the characterization of Lucius here remains consistent with his characterization and introduction in Book 1.¹¹³

The Cooks

In *Met.* 10.13 the soldier, who cannot take the donkey with him on his sea-journey to Rome, sells Lucius to two brothers, slaves of the rich Thiasus. One is a cook (*cocus*), the other a confectioner (*pistor dulciarius*). They buy Lucius as a beast of burden to carry their cooking utensils, and when not travelling keep the donkey in the room they share. As I have shown elsewhere,¹¹⁴ these two cooks are reshaped from the Greek original by Apuleius to resemble the cooks of Plautine comedy. Here I will briefly summarize their main characteristics. Their description features elaborate catalogues of food (10.13) and a comic legalistic debate in which they liken themselves to the tragic pair of

¹¹² Fick-Michel (1991: 114).

¹¹³ Cf. Ch. 7.2 above.

¹¹⁴ May (1998) with further references.

brothers Eteokles and Polyneikes (10.14), an odd comparison for two slaves, but in keeping with the comic atmosphere of the situation: this type of exaggerated paratragedy can be found in Plautus, too.¹¹⁵ The language throughout the whole scene is very Plautine, and it is obvious that Apuleius wants his readers to recall Plautine cooks.

There is however one motif missing to identify Apuleius' cooks completely with their Plautine ancestors: comedy cooks steal, especially food.¹¹⁶ It is part of their characterization in comedy, for example *Pseud.* 790f.

Forum coquinum qui vocant stulte vocant,
nam non coquinum est, verum furinum est forum.

(Those who call it the Cooks' Square give it a stupid name, because it is not the Cooks', but the Crooks' Square!)

These two are however painstakingly honest, cast against their type. Instead, it is their room-mate, the donkey, who steals their food. Lucius, never quite happy with asinine fare,¹¹⁷ gorges himself on the leftovers of the gourmet foods the two brothers keep in their room. The delicacies consist mainly of meat and poultry, which are Roman and not Greek dishes, and thus unusual in a Corinthian setting, but perfectly in place in a Plautine passage.¹¹⁸ The two brothers, at first not suspecting their pet of devouring the heavily seasoned food they store in their room, suspect each other of theft. Just as in his portrayal of the soldier, Apuleius builds up a comic characterization quite independent of the Greek model with the help of Plautine intertextuality. Again, as in the soldier's unexpected lack of punishment, the cooks are not typical comic cooks in the end, although they are carefully built up towards a climax which conveys that notion.

In the main narrative, then, of Book 10, Lucius twice encounters comic characters who, once introduced as such, act against type in a way not expected by a reader knowledgeable of drama. The changing of genres in the main story thus corresponds to that of the inset tales, although the difference consists of changes not from one genre to another, but to rather unexpected developments within the characteristics of the genre. In no other book of the *Metamorphoses* does Apuleius show more clearly that the novel subsumes all genres, and that he is able to change the expected endings of—especially the dramatic—genres, once the generic force creates the expectation of a certain outcome by the reader, into their opposite. This

¹¹⁵ Cf. Plaut. *Pseud.* 869–71, a mythological reference to Medea and Pelias, where the cook gets the myth wrong. Similar comically inadequate mythological comparisons can be found in *Cas.* 230 *et passim*.

¹¹⁶ Other examples: Zimmerman (2000: ad loc.); May (1998: *passim*).

¹¹⁷ Cf. Heath (1981).

¹¹⁸ On food as a boundary marker in comedy: Gowers (1993: 50–108).

I take to be the organizing element of the novel. Especially towards the end of Book 10, when Apuleius changes his genre from a comic-realistic novel to a paratragic salvation narrative, this is very appropriate.

The Pantomime

Towards the end of Book 10 (*Met.* 29–34), a sequence of more or less dramatic performances is presented. This is the only place in the *Metamorphoses* where a theatrical entertainment is acted out on stage, in a theatre—the Risus Festival, although taking place in a theatre, is dramatic only through its allusions to Aristophanes (cf. Ch. 8 above). The merging of dramatic genres noted in the inset tales, and to a lesser extent in the main narrative, is clearly demonstrated in this sequence of unrelated spectacles.¹¹⁹ It is also revealing that Apuleius achieves a ring composition by now acting out in ‘reality’ the removal of the curtain, *Met.* 10.29 ‘aulaeo subducto et complicitis sipariis scaena disponitur’ (‘the curtain was raised, the backcloths were folded away, and the stage was set’), whilst before he used exactly this motif metaphorically in *Met.* 1.8.¹²⁰

Lucius witnesses a sequence of spectacles: it begins with a *pyrrhiche* or weapon-dance, performed by the youth of Corinth¹²¹ in its theatre:

Nam puelli puellaeque virenti florentes aetatula, forma conspicui, veste nitidi, incessu gestuosi, Graecanica<m> saltaturi pyrricam.

(Boys and girls in the first flower of blossoming youth were embarking on the Greek Pyrrhic dance. They looked strikingly beautiful in their gleaming garments as they made their expressive entry.)

The *pyrrhiche* is performed not on stage, but in the *orchestra* of the theatre: ‘ad conseptum caveae [...] deducor [...] dum ludicris scaenorum choreis primitiae spectaculi dedicantur’ (‘I was led to the theatre [...] during the preliminaries of the show, devoted to mimic dances by performers on the stage ...’).¹²² After this, the *scaena* is revealed by the lowering of the curtains. Then the stage show begins with the ‘pantomime’ of the Judgement of Paris, which is to be followed by the display of public bestiality between Lucius and the murderess-of-five from the second inset tale in a farcical re-enactment of the *Pasiphae* mime.¹²³ Lucius then is expected to take on the role himself of a *histrio*, an actor, in this farce.¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Cf. Finkelpearl (1991: 231) for a different explanation for the incoherence of the spectacles.

¹²⁰ Cf. Ch. 5.3 above.

¹²¹ For women dancing the *pyrrhiche*: Xen. *An.* 6.1.12.

¹²² Cf. Zimmerman (2000: 362f.).

¹²³ Realism of these executions: Coleman (1990).

¹²⁴ On *histrio* (‘actor’) cf. 10.17, with Zimmerman (2000: 244) (with further literature) on *saltare*.

Although the Judgement of Paris is a well-known topic of pantomimes (Lucian *Salt.* 45, Tert. *Apol.* 15.2; Aug. *Civ.* 18.10 refers back to Apuleius)¹²⁵ and even features on the *pulpitum* relief of the almost contemporary theatre in North African Sabratha, the scene might seem to be a strange mixture of fiction and reality. It is an unusual theatrical performance, neither strictly a mime nor a pantomime.¹²⁶ It is explicitly set in a theatre,¹²⁷ not in an amphitheatre, which may be thought to cause a problem for the performance of the hunting spectacle with wild beasts which is to follow the display of Lucius and the murderess in a theatre. It has, however, been shown that a theatre is a possible setting for both events.¹²⁸

Zimmerman-de Graaf (1993) highlights the sensuous pleasure of the ecphrasis of the pantomime: the narrator lavishly describes the costumes (or rather their scarcity) of the three girls who dance Juno, Minerva, and Venus¹²⁹ as well as the beauty of the boys who portray Mercury and Paris. It is a very pretty, voyeuristic scene, without any spoken text or any parodic element in it and as such it appears to be unusual in Apuleius' novel, in which a reference to one genre is constantly undercut by sudden reversal into another one.

Fick-Michel,¹³⁰ however, points out the unreality of the staging,¹³¹ since it does not, like normal pantomimes, include a libretto: quite possibly, the dancers do not wear masks,¹³² but the latter is not quite clear from Apuleius' text. Fick-Michel argues that the performance is unreal because Apuleius wants an excuse to relate the myth, as a portrayal of the quest for Platonic

¹²⁵ Ancient evidence on pantomime is conveniently collected in Csapo and Slater (1994: 369–89).

¹²⁶ The genre of this performance is problematic, cf. Webb (2002: 287): 'unlike pantomime, it involved several actors, including women, who are apparently to be thought of as unmasked, but unlike the mime it seems to have been acted out in silence.'

¹²⁷ In 10.29 the word *cavea* is used as a *pars pro toto* for the theatre, other instances of this usage include Plaut. *Truc.* 931 and Cic. *leg.* 2.38. Cf. Zimmerman (2000: 358).

¹²⁸ Sandbach (1982: 134f.) points out that already in Terence's times the spectators do not leave the theatre to see a gladiatorial combat, but demand to see it on the very stage of the theatre where the play is being performed. He also points out that very much later than Terence the Theatre of Dionysos in Athens staged gladiatorial contests, as Dio Prus. 31.121 shows. The distinction between early use of Roman theatres for various performances involving gladiatorial games and their use in the Second Sophistic is thus not clear-cut. There is nothing unbelievable in Apuleius' description of the setting in book 10, which starts with a pantomime and is to be followed by a *venatio*. Cf. also Jory (1986b); but contrast Horsfall (2003: 61ff.) for a more sceptical view.

¹²⁹ On female performers cf. Webb (2002: 282).

¹³⁰ Performance in theatre and unreality of the staging: Fick-Michel (=Fick 1990: 224f.). Finkelpearl (1991) sets about to prove the realism of each setting, but Zimmerman (2000: 358) is more doubtful about it.

¹³¹ On the pantomimus in general: Wüst in *RE* (1949) s.v.; Steinmetz (1982: 348f.); Beacham (1991: 140ff.).

¹³² Cf. Steinmetz (1982: 348–55); Zimmerman (2000: 373, 391) on the absence of pantomime masks in later centuries.

beauty.¹³³ The extravagant shower of saffron, however, and the mechanical device which sinks the mountain into the ground of the theatre, are genuine theatrical devices.¹³⁴ Most importantly, the presence of several dancers may lift it out of the boundaries of a typical pantomime.

There seems to be a deliberate ambiguity in the pantomime: at *Met.* 10.33 the ass Lucius addresses the reader directly and denounces the venality of judges, based on Plato *Apology* 41b; but then he pulls himself up short and 'in words inspired by Plautus' comedy *Pseudolus* concedes the absurdity of a philosophizing ass (10.33.4).¹³⁵ Sandy believes that 'ecce nunc patiemur philosophantem nobis asinum' ('What? Shall we now endure that ass making pronouncements to us on philosophy?') echoes *Pseudolus*' (687) 'sed iam satis est philosophatum' ('but enough now of this philosophizing').

In the way the author treats this pantomime, too, there is a discontinuity, and a shifting of genres: the pantomime is interrupted, comically, by the philosophical excursus, and the echo, faint though it may be, of Plautus ensures the continued use of the dramatic intertext to enhance the idea of discontinuity and change, the uncertainty of the dramatic simile of life.

Reich believes that there may have once been a 'Donkey Mime', during which an actor dressed up as a donkey was beaten up by humans, and the donkey may have displayed considerable prowess. This, Reich argues, is reflected in the *Onos* and this scene of Apuleius.¹³⁶ The evidence for this is, however, again faint and debatable. If a donkey mime of some sort had existed, the allusions to it by Apuleius in a situation where, it seems, the very content of that mime (the cruelty and the sexual display) is avoided, would add to the comicality of the scene. Comically, Lucius runs away *before* the next performance, his own Pasiphae mime, starts, although characters running away usually occur at the *end* of a mime, as Cicero informs us in *Cael.* 65:

Mimi ergo iam exitus, non fabulae; in quo cum clausula non invenitur, fugit aliquis e manibus, dein scabilla concrepant, aulaeum tollitur.

(This is rather the end of a mime than of a comedy. For when in a mime a proper end cannot be found, someone escapes out of people's hands, then the castanets sound, and the curtain is raised.)

¹³³ Fick-Michel (=Fick 1990: 231).

¹³⁴ Saffron: Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.79; Prop. 4.1.15f.; Ov. *Ars* 1.103f.; Sen. *Ep.* 90.15; Mart. 5.257f., 11.8.1, etc.; machinery: Sen. *Epist.* 88.19, cf. Zimmerman-de Graaf (1993: 159f.)—For a different interpretation of the saffron: Finkelpearl (1991: 224f.).

¹³⁵ Sandy (1997: 251), (1978: 123).

¹³⁶ On the 'Donkey Mime' or 'Eselsmimus' cf. Reich (1903: 258 with n., 478, 591). On p. 443 with n. he refers to a fragment by Sophron (fr. 166), which might imply a speaking ass. The evidence is criticized by Wüst in *RE* (1932: s.v. 'Mimos', 1751).

Thus even in a portrayal of a theatrical entertainment on a stage within the novel there is not a straightforward 'realistic' version of one single literary genre: the pantomime, too, shows sudden shifts, and the mime, so skilfully anticipated through the shifts of genres, never takes off.

11.4. CONCLUSION

Lucius certainly enjoys the spectacles preceding the one planned for himself,¹³⁷ and his flight out of the theatre at the end of Book 10 is inspired not so much by disgust at the world as by fear of being eaten alive during the *venatio*. Thus the expectation of sexual transgressions perpetrated by the donkey, created by the stress on the avoidance of incest in the inset tales, never takes off—nor does the mime proper, since Lucius runs away before it even starts, rather than at its ending.

Of the four great dramatic genres current in the Roman Empire, all appear in Book 10, and nothing is quite as it seems; metamorphosis occurs not only of men into beasts, but also of one dramatic genre into another. Comic characters appear in the main story, but with non-comic characteristics and plotlines; tragedy turns into mime, and comedy into tragedy in the inset narratives. In the main narrative comic plots end in uncomic outcomes (*miles*, with only slight variation on the stock character), potentially tragic situations (*hortulanus*), or even display a paratragic possibility (Eteoklean fighting) amongst the comic cooks, who are not at all like their comic predecessors.

Furthermore, the book contains two inset narratives with an almost identical *dramatis personae*, the first one of which turns from a recognizable Phaedra-tragedy into a farce, and the second one from a Menandrian comedy into a Senecan tragedy. Finally, the idea of metamorphosis of genres is made concrete in the last scene, the pantomime, which develops from pantomime into a mime which never quite starts.

The function of the persistent theatrical imagery may be to demonstrate an ever-changing dramatic simile of life, and of a life in which everything constantly shifts and changes. It certainly indicates an insistence on the continuous changing of genres and the fate of characters from certain genres. One genre can seamlessly develop into another, and the fates of the characters are changeable, perhaps as the preparation for the appearance of Isis as a dramatic *dea ex machina* in an unlikely context.

¹³⁷ Cf. Zimmerman (2000: 154f.).

The inset tales and the main narrative are brought together in the performance at the end of Book 10, where Lucius himself is to act his part as a *histrion* in a drama, but takes the initiative and leaves the stage on which he is supposed to 'perform'. Lucius, in a rare moment of mental lucidity, realizes that no ending of a drama is preconceived, and he escapes from the one in which he himself is supposed to act. Ironically, Lucius on the one hand leaves the mime he is supposed to enact in the Corinthian theatre before it starts; on the other hand, he also leaves, at a higher level of narrative, the mime of his asinine state behind, before he encounters Isis.

The End: Isis: *Dea ex machina*?

12.1 INTRODUCTION

A work of fiction in its course creates a certain expectation as to its ending, and the way it fulfils or declines to fulfil these expectations defines in some respect the sort of work it is.¹

The ending of the *Metamorphoses*, with its sudden and unexpected appearance of a goddess, has caused centuries of readers to question its link with the preceding books, and more recently it has become central in scholarship to investigate in what way it reflects on the beginning of the novel, especially to a second-time reader. In this chapter I shall try to explore how a novel beginning with a comic prologue and a comic texture can end in such an unusual way, and in what way this ending reflects back on the understanding of the novel.

The link between Book 11 and the preceding ten books has often been analysed in order to establish whether there are links between the at first sight disparate stories of the *Metamorphoseis*, the ‘picaresque’ tale of the Greek original,² and the ‘saving’ of Lucius through Isis. Verbal parallels between the prologue to the *Metamorphoses* and the Isis book have been noted, as well as the cunning way in which Apuleius manages to introduce a different meaning though using the same words. Just a few examples may suffice: *en ecce* occurs five times in the *Metamorphoses*, twice in Book 1 and otherwise once in Books 8, 10, and 11. Powell notes that it otherwise occurs, apart from Quint. *Decl. Mai.* 2.18, only twice, namely in Senecan tragedies;³ in both dramatic instances the speaker indicates surprise in a melodramatic speech. The two instances in the first book are paralleled by an occurrence in 11.15, the speech of the Isis priest to Lucius: ‘en ecce pristinis aerumnis absolutus Isidis magnae

¹ Dunn (1996: 133). Cf. also Roberts, Dunn and Fowler (1997); Kermode (1967).

² e.g. Heine (1978).

³ Powell (2001: 35 with n. 19); Sen. *Phoen.* 42, *Oed.* 1004.—to his Apuleian instances (1.1, 8.26) add Apul. *Met.* 1.23, 10.9, and 11.15. Cf. also Griffiths (1975: 252); Bernhard (1927: 129), who takes it as a colloquialism, unjustifiedly, as the parallels indicate. Cf. now also Keulen (2003a: 79). Callebat (1968: 90) argues that Apuleius may have chosen an expression which is in harmony both with the style of comedy and his taste for flowery rhetoric.

providentia gaudens Lucius de sua Fortuna triumphat' ('For behold, Lucius is delivered from his earlier privations, and as he rejoices in the providence of the great Isis, he triumphs over his Fortune').

Furthermore, the prologus promises to 'soothe' the ears of his readers (*permulceam*), and in *Met.* 11.21, the priest of Osiris soothes Lucius' troubled mind ('anxium mihi permulcebat animum'). The prologue's reference to Latin and the *forensis sermo* ('language in use at the Roman bar') is picked up, but suddenly given a literal meaning, in Lucius' Latin exploits as a lawyer in the Roman forum (*Met.* 11.28: 'quaesticulo forensi ... sermonis Romani', ('I made a little money in the courts by pleading in the Latin language')). The prologue also contains some references to Egypt (for example 'papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam', ('Egyptian papyrus inscribed with the sharpened point of a reed from the Nile')), which are picked up again in Book 11 by references to the Egyptian goddess. This kind of word-game can be paralleled in other ways, for example when the description of Isis' hair picks up Lucius' eulogy on Photis' hair, which Apuleius may have introduced to link Book 11 more firmly to the rest of the *Metamorphoses*.⁴

These verbal parallels between the prologue and Book 11 not only stress the latter's closural nature, they also firmly establish a link on the linguistic level. It remains to be asked whether a link between beginning and ending of the novel can also be traced in generic terms, and how the appearance of a goddess in the last book might respond in such terms to the Plautine prologue. Thus, if the end with Isis is also to recall the prologue, there must be a reason other than simple ring composition in closural terms.⁵ In this context, I would like to leave the discussion of Apuleius' 'seriousness' or 'religiosity' in his description of Isis aside, and concentrate instead on the ways the appearance of a deity at the end of a literary work beginning with a comic prologue may throw some light on the generic links arguably associated with this appearance, and thus on the play with this genre throughout the whole novel.

If indeed a generic shift from comic to serious were to happen in Book 11, it is quite remarkable that Apuleius does not change his language at all: Plautine words and puns feature also in the later passages of Book 11, for example at *Met.* 11.28 Lucius introduces the proverb 'inter sacrum ego et saxum' ('between the axe and the altar'), cf. Plaut. *Capt.* 617⁶ and *Cas.* 970, to illustrate his impatient wait for initiation, and during the preparations for it,

⁴ e.g. Sandy (1978), but cf. Ch. 7.3 above on Photis' hair.

⁵ Fusillo (1997: 223) describes the ending of the *Metamorphoses* as 'tangential, introducing a new topic, unconnected to the rest of the work' instead of 'circular'. It rather seems to me that Apuleius aims at achieving both tasks at the same time, introducing a new element into the story whilst interlacing it firmly with the preceding plot.

⁶ Cf. Griffiths (1975: 335 with further literature).

he makes a pun which is reminiscent of Plautine parasites: 11.23: 'decem continuis illis diebus cibariam voluptatem cohercerem neque ullum animal essem et invinius essem' ('to discipline my pleasures in eating for the ensuing ten days, taking no animal flesh and drinking no wine'),⁷ which reinforces the idea that Lucius' parasitical character has essentially not changed.

Isis' 'seriousness' and the reality of her salvation of Lucius, as has been passionately argued by some scholars,⁸ is a valid question as far as Apuleius' reliability as source material on mystery cults is concerned; but this is not the only way to approach the goddess.⁹ After all, this deity occurs in a fictional text, a novel about a man turned into an ass by magic. A god within a fictional text does not need to authenticate religious belief, but is instead authenticated by the poetic power of that text. Thus in taking her appearance as a plot device rather than as an expression of Apuleius' genuine religious belief, I follow the guidelines offered by many ancient philosophers,¹⁰ and the conventional distinction of the three different theologies, namely that of the poets, that of the state, and that of the philosophers,¹¹ as Feeney says:¹²

In a fundamental sense, the gods existed for the ancients according to the rules of the particular context in which they were encountered, whether that be epic, lyric, cult, or philosophy.

The ancients were aware of the fictionality of their gods in literature, especially in epic, and several attempts to defend the characters of the epic gods by either rationalization or allegorization exist, whilst at the same time, the poet's freedom in characterizing the gods as plot devices was still accepted. Hence, concentrating on Isis as a plot device only follows ancient precedents, as represented in the ancient scholia to Homer or Euripides' varying portraits of his *dei ex machina*.

The genres which are most often associated with the intervention of helping deities are epic and tragedy. Epic certainly is a subtext in the *Metamorphoses*,¹³ but in epic the deities are usually associated from the beginning with their human protégés, and their intervention does not spring any surprise on their charges. In tragedy, however, the appearance of a god at the end is usually a surprising event for the characters on stage, who generally had not previously been aware of the gods' interest in their actions.

⁷ Gastronomical puns by Plautine parasites: Gowers (1993: 76).

⁸ Cf. Brenk (1999: 142 (with references to further literature)), who sees no reason to doubt the seriousness of Isis and even Osiris.

⁹ *Realien*-based approach to the Isis cult: Egelhaaf-Gaiser (2000), reviewed by May (2002).

¹⁰ Feeney (1991: Ch. 1).

¹¹ Lieberg (1973).

¹² Feeney (1991: 45).

¹³ Cf. Ch. 1.2 above.

Thus I would like to argue for a typological similarity between Isis and a *dea ex machina* as portrayed in drama. If Isis is accepted as a *dea ex machina*, the question about Apuleius' 'serious' belief in her is of just as much importance as the 'seriousness' of a deity in a comedy or tragedy in his/her aid to the story and its characters, and should be analysed as analogous to the conception of helping gods in drama. It should be noted that the term *deus ex machina* is here used in the wider sense as a deity appearing at the end of a drama, either 'out of the machine' or on the rooftop or on stage, mainly in the sense it is understood by Aristotle in *Po.* 1454a37ff.¹⁴ as a general intervention of a god in the action of the play.¹⁵

12.2. TRAGEDY

The question of the role of Isis in Apuleius, and of his religious attitude to her, then, if the identification of her as a *dea ex machina* is accepted, may also be compared to the similar discussion about Euripides' attitude to gods in his dramas. Kitto has pointed out the differences of treatment of the gods between Euripides' tragedies and his 'tragicomedies':

[Athenians] were ready to laugh when Aristophanes supplied Prometheus with an umbrella, and with obscene jokes against the upper gods, or when Euripides makes Hermes hide in the shrubbery [sc. in the *Ion*]. This does not mean that the Athenians had 'outgrown' the serious treatment of the gods, such as Prometheus and Hermes received in the *Prometheus Vincetus*. Euripides guyed Heracles in the *Alcestis*, but a dozen years later he could treat the same Heracles with a splendid earnestness in the *Hercules Furens*.¹⁶

Lefkowitz, on the other hand, has shown that Euripides' deities are still considered as such, and that the characters in the plays expressing 'philosophical' or critical opinions on the gods do so within their character rather than as mouthpieces of the author,¹⁷ and no hint as to the 'seriousness' of the

¹⁴ Cf. Duncan (1935).

¹⁵ Gods in tragedy need not appear only at the end of the play: not only in Euripides' *Heracles* (Iris and Lyssa), but also in some lost Sophoclean plays the gods may appear mid-tragedy: Parker (1999: 12).

¹⁶ Kitto (1961: 315).

¹⁷ Lefkowitz (1989: 79): 'Since no one in antiquity assumed that because he described the gods as uncaring Sophocles was being impious, why should we continue to ask whether Euripides was being either impious or ironical in his portrayal of the gods?'—For the portrayal of the gods in Sophocles as 'through a glass darkly' only cf. Parker (1999). Zagagi (1990: 91) points out that the appearance of the gods in Menander does not turn him into a religious playwright.

author's perception of them can be gleaned from the treatment of the gods in the plays.

One should avoid a biographical approach to tragic gods as much as to those in Apuleius. The deities especially in Euripides are employed as the playwright needs them to be employed; the same god may be ridiculous in one play, and very serious in another, without either approach reflecting the views of Euripides. Hence, the discussion of theodicy and ironic readings of Euripidean gods is bound never to be closed.¹⁸

The discussion about Apuleius' Isis should be considered in the same terms. If she is a *dea ex machina*, she is certainly the goddess most apt for this particular revelation in her appearance as Isis-Tyche or Isis-Fortuna,¹⁹ and her function within the novel is indeed an integrated one, but not primarily as a unifying religious symbol, but as a clever genre marker. We have no other treatment of Isis or mystery religion in Apuleius, except perhaps his statement in *Apol.* 55 that he is initiated into several mystery cults (not mentioning Isis) and faithfully observes the rules—but there, too, Apuleius follows another agenda in portraying himself in this way, that of asserting his personal piety.

Given that Isis' intervention transforms Lucius' life from unhappiness to happiness, the closest parallel in tragedies can be found in the late Euripidean plays, which are sometimes referred to as 'tragicomedies'.²⁰ Barnes (1964: 128) offers a definition of tragicomedy, including 'a discrepancy between the attitude of the characters and that of the spectators—not as the result of 'tragic irony', but when all the facts are in.' The plays she considers are those with an (often problematic) 'happy' ending, *Iphigenia Taurica* (with hesitation), *Alcestis*, *Helen*, *Ion*, and *Orestes*. Their similarity consists in the fact that the protagonists suffer from a genuine, potentially tragic, problem, but the solution offered by the playwright is inadequate in respect of its seriousness. The problem of tragicomedy then is that it does not provide the answer to the question of how humans are to deal with the particular problem they are confronted with, and thus utterly deny being seen as tragedies. Comedy and tragedy both work within strictly defined boundaries of genre, and at the end of a comedy all is well. In tragicomedy, the audience is left with a feeling of unease, with the question of whether this at first glance 'happy' solution is indeed the best possible one (cf. for example *Ion*).

¹⁸ Full bibliography: Lefkowitz (1989); Parker (1999).

¹⁹ See § 12.4 below.

²⁰ *Alcestis* is not a late play, but a substitute for a satyr play and thus of quite a different character from the late 'tragicomedies'.

Apuleius aims at the same feeling in his readers. The discrepancy between the appearance of Isis and her sometimes excessively greedy priests unquestioningly revered by Lucius, the uncomfortable feeling that Lucius has again been duped, cause the unease most modern readers feel when reading the *Metamorphoses*. Lucius' final happiness is in stark contrast with the reader's disquiet.

Although, just as in the *Ion*, a goddess appears *ex machina* at the end of the novel, there is no real tragic theme available in the *Metamorphoses*, no tragic conflict to be solved before or after the catastrophe occurs. As in Euripides' tragicomedies, the deity explains suddenly that all that happened was in the best interest of the humans; thus Athena in *Ion* interferes at the crucial moment when Ion wants to know whether Apollo or a mortal is his father. Only then does she explain that Apollo had been working on Ion's behalf behind the scenes all the time (1561ff.), and the recognition of the child was his work as well, to protect Ion from being killed by Kreousa. Athena continues by issuing some of Apollo's commands to Ion (1569ff.), concerning his future life and move to the land of Kekrops (1571). In *Ion* and *Helen*, the outcome is equally uncertain to the audience, and a similar sense of expectation is created. The difference between the 'proper' tragedies and the tragicomedies of Euripides also concerns dramatic irony: the anagnorisis between Orestes and Electra is 'tragic' and moving, since the audience knows they are brother and sister, and each believes the other dead. In *Helen*, however, the failed anagnorisis of Helen and Menelaos is comic, since Helen should be able to make the guess about Menelaos' identity herself instead of fleeing from him.²¹

Apuleius' turn towards the unexpected by introducing a *dea ex machina* into an unlikely plot seems to overstep the rules even of Euripidean tragicomedy and in its unexpectedness the ending is comic rather than tragic: the reader is unable to anticipate the end of the novel, since but little indication of Isis' intervention has gone before.

Isis, through her priest, explains Lucius' metamorphosis into an ass as a punishment for his slavish pleasures²²—and only then do we find out that everything that had happened was instigated by a goddess: 'En ecce pristinis aerumnis absolutus Isidis magnae providentia gaudens Lucius de sua Fortuna triumphat', ('for behold, Lucius is delivered from his earlier privations, and as he rejoices in the providence of the great Isis, he triumphs over his Fortune'; *Met.* 11.15).

²¹ Seidensticker (1982: 179f.); Dunn (1996: 149).

²² On *serviles voluptates* ('slavish pleasures'): Penwill (1975).

The gods in the late Euripidean tragedies are not hostile to the protagonists, but intent on helping them out of their dilemmas, and that is a function comparable to that of Isis. Furthermore, another feature of Euripidean tragicomedies is the misinterpretation of gods by humans: 'when in the early part of the play mortals with their deficient knowledge heap upon a god reproaches which the conclusion proves to be misguided.'²³ Lucius, who blames Fortuna for his bad luck,²⁴ realizes at the end that Isis-Fortuna has acted for his own good.

The *deus ex machina* appears after the main event of the tragedy has been acted out, and in the other Euripidean tragicomedies the *deus ex machina* is also in varying degrees an artificial occurrence.²⁵ In Apuleius, Lucius might have managed to eat the roses without the appearance of Isis, as Loukios does in the *Onos*. Furthermore, when the old priest of Isis claims that the metamorphosis into an ass was Isis' punishment for Lucius' *serviles voluptates*, the unexpectedness of this revelation, which explains the metamorphosis only by hindsight, is unsatisfactory for the first-time reader.

Still, if *dei ex machina* such as Athena in *Ion* give advice and prophesy, this is exactly what Isis does (*Met.* 11.6), namely give advice on how to turn into a human again, and the command always to remain in her service:

plane memineris et penita mente conditum semper tenebis mihi reliqua vitae tuae curricula adusque terminos ultimi spiritus vadata. [...] Vives autem beatus, vives in mea tutela gloriosus, et cum spatium saeculi tui permensus ad inferos demearis, ibi quoque in ipso subterraneo semirutundo me [...] adorabis.

(What you must carefully remember and keep ever locked deep in your heart is that the remaining course of your life until the moment of your last breath is pledged to me. [...] Your future life will be blessed, and under my protection will bring you fame, and when you have lived out your life's span and you journey to the realm of the dead, even there in the hemisphere beneath the earth you will constantly adore me.)

Fusillo stresses the Euripidean tendency in the later tragedies to portray the 'Gottesverlassenheit' of the protagonists, which is a theme in *Ion* and *Orestes*: since the protagonists feel forsaken by the deity, the ending is problematic. Similarly, *Iphigenia Taurica* and *Helen* portray a secularized version of the *deus ex machina*, with the god only agreeing with the actions of the mortals, not interfering decisively in the action. This retiring aspect of the deity goes along with the foregrounding of the motif of the protagonist saving himself, as exemplified again in *Iphigenia Taurica*, *Ion*, *Orestes*, and even *Helen*.²⁶

²³ Parker (1999: 21f., with n. 41 for further literature on theodicy).

²⁴ References in Wlosok (1969=1999).

²⁵ Dunn (1996: 137f. with n. 15 for further literature); Nicolai (1990).

²⁶ Fusillo (1992: 273ff): *Ion*, *Orestes*; p. 276ff.: *Iphigenia Taurica*, *Helen*. 'Selbstrettungsmotiv' p. 278–81.

This is, however, different from Apuleius' Isis, whose closeness to Lucius is again and again, although belatedly, stressed. Thus, tragedy, or rather late Euripidean tragicomedy, may be an intertext, but does not offer a precisely overlapping parallel.

12.3. COMEDY

In no extant Greek tragedy does a god immediately appear as an answer to a mortal's prayer. In *Amphitruo*, however, which has already before been seen as an important intertext for the *Metamorphoses*, this does happen, though only narrated in a paratragic messenger speech, and is anticipated in the prologue: *Amph.* 90: 'Iovem invocarunt, venit, auxilio is fuit' ('they invoked Jupiter, he came, and helped them'). Thus a closer look at comedy becomes necessary.²⁷

The appearance of a deity at the end of a drama—as a *deus ex machina*—is commonly associated with—primarily—Euripidean tragedy, while that of deities in comedy is usually associated with the prologue (Pan in *Dyskolos*, Agnoia in *Perikeiromene*, Auxilium in *Cistellaria*, Arcturus in *Rudens*, and, most importantly, Tyche in *Aspis*).²⁸ Only one comedy with a *deus ex machina* at the end is extant, the *Amphitruo*, but it was not the only comedy with that phenomenon.

Interestingly, and largely unnoticed by modern scholarship, the mythological travesties in Middle Comedy feature more evidence for a *deus ex machina*. A survey of such travesties in Middle Comedy is offered by Nesselrath (1990: 188–204), who concludes that this subject actually forms a substantial part of the output of Middle Comedy. Mythological travesty ranges from a third to more than half of the known titles between 400 and 350, but in the second half of the century the percentage is much smaller.²⁹

In New Comedy, mythological travesty is present, though rarer. In Menander perhaps five out of ninety-five known titles may have had a mythological subject (*Dardanos*, *Nemesis*, *Trophonios*, *Chalkis*, *Pseudherakles*).³⁰ As for Philemon, it seems that at most four of sixty-two known plays may have had a mythological subject (*Heroes*, *Myrmidones*, *Palamedes*, *Pyrrhos*), and Diphilos had between five and nine mythological parodies out of fifty-nine known titles (*Danaides*, *Hekate*, *Herakles*, *Heros*, *Theseus*, *Lemniai*, *Peliades*,

²⁷ Literature on the divine influence in comedy in Zagagi (1990).

²⁸ Plautine prologues: Raffaelli (1983); gods in Plautus: Duckworth (1994: 295–300); active involvement of the prologue deities in the plots: Lefèvre (1979: 320ff.); Zagagi (1990).

²⁹ Nesselrath (1990: 201).

³⁰ Körte s.v. 'Menander (9)' in *RE* (1931).

Pyrrha, Sappho).³¹ Thus mythological travesty, although commoner in Middle Comedy, may also be found occasionally in New Comedy.

The plots of these plays are difficult to reconstruct, but it seems certain that gods appeared in them on a regular basis, for example Jupiter and Hermes in Antiphanes' *Ganymedes*. Nesselrath (1990: 209ff.) even conjectures a *deus ex machina* ending for this particular play, and considers the use of this feature also for Anaxandrides' *Tereus* (p. 217) and Euboulos' *Europa* (p. 235). Euboulos' *Antiope* seems to have followed its Euripidean source closely in the shaping of its ending, and in it Hermes certainly appeared as a *deus ex machina*; his speech is extant (Euboulos fr. 9 K–A), ordering Zethos to go to Thebes (because the Thebans provide good food!), and Amphion to Athens, because her inhabitants are very musical.³²

Dei ex machina not in Nesselrath include the unknown deity of Plato comicus 199 K.–A. ('*incerta comoedia*') and the speaker of Antiphanes 104 K.–A. (*Thamyros*). In both cases it is evident that the comic authors parodied Euripidean tragedies.³³ The latter example is an imitation of an Euripidean *aition*, showing again that a *deus ex machina* in comedy is a device borrowed from tragedy for parodic purposes. Similarly, Apuleius may have adapted this tragic device into his novel, and for a similar purpose: it is not the god who is comic in either case, but the use of the god within the plot.

It thus seems that in several comedies a god may have appeared *ex machina* at the end of a play in order to sort out the problems of the mortals in trouble. What the deity tells the humans to do may not always be of a pressing nature, solving the issue of life and death, as in tragedies 'proper', but may be concerned with more down-to-earth matters such as food. Isis in Apuleius at first sight seems to save Lucius from destruction, but whether this issue is really a matter of life and death is debatable, since Loukios in the *Onos* manages perfectly well without her help.

Apuleius thus may have been inspired either by a lost Middle Comedy or by a mythological travesty from New Comedy, or conceivably by mythological mime.³⁴ More likely it is not a reference to a particular play, but to a generic motif. It is perhaps worth pointing out again that a relief on the *pulpitum* in Sabratha from the late second century AD may portray a mythological travesty as found in Middle Comedy (cf. Ch. 2.4 above).

Unfortunately the fragmentary nature of Euboulos fragment 9 K.–A. does not allow a decision as on whether the god was called for in a prayer or

³¹ Nesselrath (1990: 202).

³² Nesselrath (1990: 223f.).

³³ Cf. K.–A. ad locc.; Hunter (1983: 97 (*Antiope*), 125 (*Europa*)) on the Euboulos fragments.

³⁴ For evidence for mythological mimes cf. the literature mentioned above in Ch. 1 n. 42 and Ch. 9 n. 57 (Laberius' *Ephebus*).

appeared of his own volition. The *Amphitruo*, our only extant mythological burlesque and an important intertext for Apuleius, certainly allows some closer analysis. Contrary to tragic use, where the gods never answer directly a mortal's plea for help, Jupiter in *Amphitruo* (and Isis in *Metamorphoses*) interferes with the affairs of men after being asked for help directly. Jupiter is asked by Alcumena to aid her in giving birth in 1061 ('deos sibi invocat', ('she invokes the gods to help her')), and he aids her as a *deus ex machina*. It is noticeable that Jupiter appears twice at the end of the play, once after Alcumena asks him for help, as Bromia narrates in her messenger speech, and once, strictly speaking unnecessarily, in 1131ff. to address Amphitruo, although the duped husband has already been pacified by Bromia's tale.³⁵ The doubling of the god's appearance deprives it of its grandeur and majesty, created by a feeling of the uniqueness of a god intervening in the human characters' world, and ultimately adds to the comic effect, since when Jupiter appears to Amphitruo he has no really important issue to solve, but only reconciles the willing king to his fate as a cuckold. A single epiphany at the end of a play may look majestic, but a doubling of the motif smacks of comic exuberance.

In Apuleius, it is not only Isis who appears and saves Lucius from his calamity; later on in Book 11 the strictly speaking 'unnecessary' apparition of Osiris asks him for further initiations. The repeated initiations into Isis' and Osiris' mysteries are a matter of debate between scholars: although the rites of Osiris are different from those of Isis and thus warrant a second initiation,³⁶ there is little point for them in the narrative structure. Isis has fulfilled her function as a saviour already, and the second and third initiations of Lucius may function as a hint for the reader to take the mystery narrative less seriously, and may make him/her understand their function as a tool to reinforce the reader's impression that Lucius is still as credulous as before.³⁷

Just as the doubling of Jupiter's appearance in *Amphitruo* takes away the awe the *deus ex machina* may inspire, the doubling of the motifs of initiation is a strong indication against a straightforward explanation of Book eleven as a mere salvation narrative. Although double initiations may be possible in reality,³⁸ and even pressing for a mystic, it would still be more effective in a fictional text, if grandeur and pathos are to be created, to create a sense of closure through one single appearance. The repetitive apparitions distract from this grandeur, and give the novel a comic note.

³⁵ Cf. *Amph.* 1125ff.

³⁶ Griffiths (1975: 330f.).

³⁷ Winkler (1985: 217–23); for an early statement of unease cf. Berreth (1931: 115).

³⁸ Cf. Brenk (1999).

(Accidental) verbal parallels between Plautus and Apuleius can also be found. Jupiter 1131f. reassures Amphitruo:

bono animo es, adsum auxilio, Amphitruo, *tibi et tuis*:

(Be happy, I am here to help you, Amphitruo, *you* and *yours*.)

Met. 11.5 Isis uses similar phrases to calm down Lucius:

En adsum *tui<s>* commota, Luci, precibus

(Here I am, Lucius, roused by *your* prayers.)

The verb as well as the direct address to the mortal is the same, and although the grammatical case of *tuis* is different, in both cases the sentences show remarkable similarities in their surface structure, both show the reverse of a prayer to the gods to be present, usually phrased with *adeste* (e.g. Liv. 2.6.7, Ov. *Met.* 7.198).³⁹ The phrasing in Bromia's story *Amph.* 1064f. is similar and shows the actual superfluousness of the second appearance of Jupiter.:

Alcumena, adest auxilium, ne time;

et tibi et tuis propitius caeli cultor advenit.

(Alcumena, help is here, do not fear. The lord of the heavens has come kindly to you and yours.)

Besides being the declaration of a deity rushing to help, *en adsum* appears also in Lucan 1.201 ('en adsum victor terrae marique Caesar', ('here I am, the conqueror of land and sea, Caesar')), Ov. *Ars* 1.555 of a god's appearance (Dionysos to Ariadne), Ov. *Met.* 5.10 (Phineus), and Sen. *Dial.* 2.6.4.1. In Lucan the phrase certainly has tragic or paratragic meaning, given that Caesar speaks it whilst crossing the Rubicon and, as Lucan points out in Book 7, is going to be a god, and in *Ars* it plainly denotes divine epiphany, but also in a comic context.⁴⁰

In *Amphitruo* Jupiter appears not only once, but twice to help Alcumena in her plight, if the second apparition is taken to reconcile the married couple more thoroughly. As has been seen in the discussion of *Cupid and Psyche*, the *mise en abyme* of the *Metamorphoses*,⁴¹ where Jupiter takes a similar role in ensuring that two lovers can live together again, *Amphitruo* may be an important intertext in the *Metamorphoses*, and the generic attribution of a *deus ex machina* to tragedy only is not as clear-cut as it may have seemed at first glance. Jupiter acts as *deus ex machina* in the ultimately comic *Cupid and*

³⁹ Cf. Appel (1909: 115f.).

⁴⁰ For the tragic connotation of *adsum* in Verg. *Aen.* 7.454 cf. Horsfall (1999: ad loc.) (with parallels).

⁴¹ Cf. Ch. 9 above.

Psyche story, uniting the two lovers just as Apollo initiates the wedding between Orestes and Hermione at the end of *Orestes*. The end of the *mise en abyme* anticipates the end of the novel, and just as the end of *Cupid and Psyche* recalls comedy, the epiphany of Isis may be seen in a comic context.

Another non-tragic device may be the place whence Isis appears: In Apuleius, the apparition of Isis is not from 'on high', but from the sea (*Met.* 11.3):

Necdum satis coniveram et ecce pelago medio venerandos diis etiam vultus attollens emergit divina facies; ac dehinc paulatim toto corpore perlucidum simulacrum excusso pelago ante me constitisse visum est.

(But scarcely had I closed my eyes when suddenly from the mist of the sea a divine figure arose, revealing features worthy of veneration even by the gods. Then gradually the gleaming form seemed to stand before me in full figure as she shook off the sea-water.)

This image of the goddess shaking off some water from her clothes and hair as part of the epiphany is hardly in keeping with a majestic entrance. Isis, just like Venus in *Cupid and Psyche*, appears out of the sea. The parallel between the two goddesses, of whom Venus has been shown to have some comic features, again suggests a comic rather than a tragic context. Comic deities, in accord with their non-threatening nature, appear not from on high but enter through a stage door, as for example Pan enters from his shrine in the *Dyskolos* when speaking the prologue.⁴² There is also no indication of where Jupiter comes from when he enters the scene in *Amphitruo* (1130),⁴³ where he is announced by thunder, or where he exits to (at 1143)—'ego in caelum migro' ('I'll wander into heaven') is a rather cosy phrase, which does not indicate the use of a crane. After her first apparition Isis simply leaves, 'numen invictum in se recessit' ('that invincible deity retired to keep her own company'; *Met.* 11.7); the expression is unparalleled.⁴⁴ Thus Isis, in agreement with her non-threatening nature, certainly does not appear from above, nor does she disappear in a tragic mode.

12.4. 'WHY ISIS?'

If Isis is introduced as a comic *dea ex machina*, she shares a common problem with some of the other comic deities: it is uncertain whether Isis actually

⁴² Technicalities of a *deus ex machina*, and the theory that a comedy divine prologue entered from the stage rather than from on high: Mastronarde (1990: esp. 288).

⁴³ Cf. Christenson (2000: ad loc.).

⁴⁴ Griffiths (1975: 167f.) adduces *Ov. Met.* 2.302f. as the closest parallel.

achieves anything. Lucius would have been retransformed by eating the roses anyway, as his Greek equivalent in the *Onos* actually does without divine intervention. When Isis claims at the end that she has been influential on Lucius' fate throughout the first ten books, she retrospectively gains some importance as the deity behind some of Lucius' own actions, giving for example his desire for the knowledge of magic a sort of 'double motivation', a divine as well as a human impulse, that Vogt-Spira traces in the Menandrian comedies.⁴⁵ It has been shown that in all three extant Menandrian comedies which have a divine prologue that same deity has considerable influence on the action throughout the whole plot of the comedy.⁴⁶ In Apuleius this influence is visible, too, but only for the second-time reader who is willing to accept with Lucius the transformation from the *fortuna caeca* to the *fortuna videns*, from blind Fortune to seeing Fortune, and her identification with Isis.

Isis per se is neither a tragic nor a comic goddess, occurring in neither genre. Isis is a minor deity, not an Olympian, being in this respect like the deities in comedy. It is thus necessary to ask Winkler's question again: 'Why Isis?'⁴⁷—why, if Apuleius wants to create a helpful and comic *dea ex machina* intervening at the end of the novel, does he introduce a goddess who at first sight is non-dramatic? There are several reasons for this choice of deity. As Winkler also argues, Isis is the natural deity to refer to when writing a story about an ass: the worship of Isis was widespread over the Hellenistic world, has a soteriological nature, and has some associations with the grotesque *Life of Aesop*, indicating a not-too-serious appearance as a helper figure in that novelistic text.⁴⁸ This goddess can thus lend herself both to a serious and to a comic interpretation, a duplicity stressed by Winkler.

I, then, should like to turn the screw on the Isis interpretations of the *Metamorphoses* yet again, by analysing her as a syncretistic composite of Isis and another goddess, who occurs in drama, Fortuna-Tyche. This goddess, a major deity in the novels, is influential both in tragedy (where she does not appear in person) and comedy (where she does). In Apuleius' syncretic approach, Fortuna-Tyche and Isis are identified from an early stage of the novel. Isis and Fortuna⁴⁹ are linked already in Book 2 by an ecphrasis (*Met.* 2.4). One of the statues in Byrrhena's house, a goddess crowned with palm leaves, standing on a globe, is 'a concealed epiphany of Isis in her role as

⁴⁵ 'Double motivation': Vogt-Spira (1992: 5 with further literature).

⁴⁶ Zagagi (1990).

⁴⁷ Winkler (1985: 276ff.).

⁴⁸ Cf. Holzberg (1992). Cf. also Xenophon of Ephesus for other appearances of Isis in the ancient novels.

⁴⁹ Function of Fortuna in the *Metamorphoses*: Rohde (1914: 300); Junghanns (1932: 163f.), Tatum (1969: 61f., 88f., esp. 94 with n. 184); Hijmans et al. (1981: 91f.).

Isis-Victoria-Fortuna.⁵⁰ Early on, then, Isis and Fortuna are identified as the same goddess, and that in a significantly anticipatory context. Fortuna's identification as Isis-Fortuna recurs throughout the novel,⁵¹ and Fortuna is portrayed again and again as blind, while Isis in Book 11 is finally identified as 'Fortunam, sed videntem' and linked with *providentia* ('Fortune with eyes'; *Met.* 11.15, contrasted with blind Fortune).⁵²

In Greek, Tyche is the main divine agent of comedy and of the novel,⁵³ and the use of her as an active character in a novel is only taken to its final stage in the *Metamorphoses*, since, although the element of a deity's involvement is employed in some of the Greek novels (for example Pan in *Daphnis and Chloe*, itself recalling Menander's *Dyskolos*, cf. also Xenophon of Ephesus), the active and helping apparition of a god in the Latin novel is unique.

Isis is linked with Fortuna-Tyche in Apuleius, and Tyche's role in drama demands a closer look. Tyche, a very active element in Greek tragedy, especially in Euripides, is an agent in several Euripidean plays, but especially in the later plays, the tragicomedies, she is the key mover of events behind the scenes.⁵⁴ She becomes even more important in the novels, and sometimes the influence of late Euripides on the development of the novel is pointed out with reference to Tyche.⁵⁵

A passage in *Ion* (1512ff.) is important, since there Tyche is accused of having caused the tragic action:

ὦ μεταβαλοῦσα μυρίους ἥδη βροτῶν
καὶ δυστυχῆσαι καὶ θῆις αὐτῇ πράξει καλῶς,
Τύχη, παρ' οἷαν ἤλθομεν στάθμην βίου
μητέρα φονεῦσαι καὶ παθεῖν ἀνάξια.

(O Fortune, you have brought countless mortals to misery and then to blessedness again! How close I came to killing my own mother and suffering undeserved woe! trans. Kovacs, Loeb)

Although it is not Tyche who is responsible for the action (it is Apollo who has initiated the tragedy by raping Kreousa), it is she who is blamed. The action of

⁵⁰ Peden (1985: 382).

⁵¹ Isis-Tyche: Griffiths (1975: 241ff., 253, with archeological evidence and further literature).

⁵² References are collected and analysed in Wlosok (1969=1999).

⁵³ Heine (1962: 138ff.); Vogt-Spira (1992: 6f. with further literature).

⁵⁴ Even if Tyche may be considered as playing an active part in these tragedies, it is debatable whether she is conceived of as a personalized deity rather than an abstract concept. Busch (1937: 12) lists only three certain occurrences: S. *OT* 1080f.; E. *Hec.* 786, *Ion* 1512ff.; Spira (1960) is sceptical, too. Modern scholarship is certain about many more, cf. Dunn (1996)—Passages in other Greek literature in Rohde (1914: 297ff.).

⁵⁵ As e.g. argued by Weinreich (1962: 24)—The novel certainly does not grow out of the tragicomedies (as Trenkner (1958) also believes), but is influenced by them intertextually.

the Euripidean tragicomedies is much more influenced by Tyche⁵⁶ than by the plan of Zeus as in Aeschylus. It is accidental that Menelaos should be shipwrecked in Egypt just at the right time in *Helen*, and the text itself mentions Tyche twenty-four times, appointing her the prime mover of the plot.

Her role changes and becomes even more all-encompassing in comedy. Accusations against Tyche become much more frequent in New Comedy, for example fr. 681 K.-A., or *Kitharistes*:⁵⁷ 'ὡς ποικίλον πρᾶγμ' ἐστὶ καὶ πλάνον τύχη' ('How checkered and two-faced a thing is chance!'; trans. Arnott). The idea of changes (μεταβολαί) of Tyche is also a commonplace in Greek comedy.⁵⁸ In tragedy, Tyche is occasionally blamed as a malevolent influence (as in the *Ion*), thwarting the efforts of mortals, but in comedy, though she is often blamed for the mishaps afflicting mortals, the outcome is still happy. Some of the epithets used of her in comedy are taken up again in Apuleius, and in both comedy and the novel Fortuna-Tyche is certainly seen as the personalized Hellenistic goddess. She is blind,⁵⁹ and interested in change.

In Menander, of course, Tyche is even allowed to speak the prologue (and thus be the leading deity behind the comedy, influencing the plot) of the *Aspis*. The *Aspis* is a difficult play, since the presumed death of the young man in battle with which the play begins indicates how close the plot of this comedy is to potential tragedy.⁶⁰ The choice of Tyche as the presiding goddess of this play shows her essential ambivalence. It is commonly agreed that Tyche plays a major role in the play and is not only present in the prologue,⁶¹ but also at the semantic level of the play. Appeals to ἀνέλπιστος or δεινὴ τύχη ('unexpected' or 'terrible' Tyche, 18f.; cf. ll. 213ff.) gain an added meaning, because the audience knows that Tyche is behind the plot, whilst the characters within the play misjudge her grossly.

In Apuleius, it is not at all evident for the first-time readers that Isis-Fortuna will play such an important part in the novel's plot. For them the recurring references to blind fortune are just the typical stock-in-trade of the novelist; only for second-time readers does the constant reference to fortune become a pointer towards Isis at the novel's end.

In the Greek novels, Tyche is envious, drives the couple into disasters and plays games with them (Ach.Tat. 4.9, 5.2), and sometimes the link between

⁵⁶ Importance of Tyche in the later dramas of Euripides: Spira (1960: 132–8); Dunn (1996: 147 with n. 36 for further literature).

⁵⁷ Fr. 8 Arnott (1979–2000: ii) = 8 Körte = 288 Kock = 874 Jäkel (*Sententiae Menandri*).

⁵⁸ Cf. Menander, frs. 322 K.-A.; 853 K.-A.; Philemon fr. 178, ll. 11ff. K.-A.

⁵⁹ Menander fr. 682 K.-A. 'τυφλὸν γε καὶ δύστηνόν ἐστιν ἡ Τύχη' ('Tyche is blind and wretched'), cf. fr. 711.

⁶⁰ Tragic language: Gomme and Sandbach (1973: ad loc. and ad 500ff.).

⁶¹ The play is analysed in detail by Vogt-Spira (1992: 75–88), with extensive literature.

Tyche in drama and the novel is skilfully drawn, for example in Heliod. 7.6 in a dramatically charged passage (Kalasiris arrives just before his two sons can kill each other in a scene echoing both the *Phoenissae* and the duel between Hektor and Achilles in the *Iliad* and acts like a *deus ex machina* to interrupt the duel):⁶²

ἡ πόλις δὲ ὥσπερ ἐκ θεάτρου περιεστῶσα [. . .] τότε δὴ πως εἴτε τι δαιμόνιον εἴτε **Τύχη** τις τὰ ἀνθρώπεια βραβεύουσα καὶ νὸν ἐπεισὸδιον ἐπετραγῶδει τοῖς δρωμένοις, ὥσπερ εἰς ἀνταγώνισμα δράματος ἀρχὴν ἄλλου παρεισφέρουσα, καὶ τὸν Καλάσιριν εἰς ἡμέραν καὶ ὥραν ἐκείνην ὥσπερ ἐκ μηχανῆς [. . .] ἐφίστησι

(the entire population of the city lining the walls, watching like the presiding judges in a theater—at that very moment either some divine power or *some fortune* that arbitrates over human destiny made the drama take a new and tragic twist, as if bringing a second drama on stage to compete with the one already in progress: by a miracle of stagecraft [sc. the *mechane*] it brought Kalasiris onto the scene on that very day, at that very hour; trans. Morgan)

There is certainly a link between drama and Tyche in the novels,⁶³ and Apuleius allows his protagonist to blame *fortuna mala* ('evil Fortune') for his misfortunes in comic exaggeration.⁶⁴ Still, by introducing Fortuna as a personified deity, Apuleius leaves the level of both tragedy and the Greek novels behind, where Tyche represents only the experience of constant change of fortune.⁶⁵

In Roman comedy, the goddess Fortuna is allowed a profile quite as high as the one she enjoys in the *Metamorphoses* (there are about forty mentions of her in Roman comedy),⁶⁶ and some characters attribute their mishaps to her blindness and fickleness, for example *Rud.* 501:⁶⁷

Malam Fortunam in aedis te adduxi meas.

(I brought you as bad Fortune into my house.)

Good events are attributed to good fortune (*Poen.* 973): 'Fortuna fuerit adiutrix tibi' ('Fortuna will be your aide.'). Fortuna is the all-commanding deity of comedy, intent on arranging a happy outcome for the protagonists of the play.

⁶² Cf. the note by the translator John R. Morgan in Reardon (1989: 492). On the dramatic vocabulary used cf. Paulsen (1992: 23f., 167ff.).

⁶³ Fortuna in Petron. *Sat.* 87, 133, 137, 141 etc.; in 114 she is *crudelis*.

⁶⁴ Wlosok (1969=1999), Fick-Michel (1991: 367–93), whose list of passages p. 367 is exhaustive.

⁶⁵ Rohde (1914: 299).

⁶⁶ Fortuna in Plautus: Champeaux (1981). Tyche and Fortuna in comedy: Vogt-Spira (1992).

⁶⁷ Cf. also *Pseud.* 673–80; *Capt.* 304 etc.

I should thus like to take Isis in Book 11 in the first place as a *dea ex machina*, as often found in drama. Since in tragedy Tyche is more of an abstract concept, not taking part in the action at all, and Isis is completely unheard of in these plays, the interrelation between various genres Apuleius juggles with is apparent here. Fortuna-Tyche occurs in person and most frequently in comedy, which I take to be the most prominent intertext here. This has consequences for our interpretation of the ‘meaning’ of this ending.⁶⁸

Just at the point when Lucius cannot sink any lower, Isis-Fortuna intervenes. The parallelism to *Cupid and Psyche*, with its comic ending, tragicomic elements, and a similar appearance of a *deus ex machina* shows Isis’ appearance to be a divine intervention of both tragic and comic potential. Apuleius takes a goddess, who directs the action of comedies even to the extent that she speaks the prologue to at least one of them and is called upon in many of the others, and instead of giving her a comic prologue, allows her to have an appearance as a tragicomic *dea ex machina*. Thus Apuleius manages to create, out of elements of the two dramatic genres, something very much his own, and very much tongue-in-cheek, too.

Thus the sometimes rather passionate debate about ‘Apuleius’ seriousness’ is viewed from the wrong perspective: Isis could be considered not so much as the pagan answer to Christian salvation, but rather as the appropriate goddess who thanks to her characteristics as Isis-Fortuna-Tyche and her links with roses⁶⁹ can dissolve the catastrophe that Lucius (nearly) gets himself into; other *dei ex machina* prevent the slaughter of kin or even sexual transgression (the Dioskouroi in *Helen* 1642ff. announce to Theoklymenos that his intended marriage to Helen is opposed by the gods),⁷⁰ and Isis, or so Lucius believes, provides him with a refuge from the threatened miasma of intercourse with a murderess-of-five and from being eaten alive in an unseemly spectacle. Since Isis actually does nothing of the kind (it is Lucius, after all, who escapes from the theatre, and the procession with the roses probably would have passed the waiting donkey anyway), there is no true tragic plot represented here, but there is some similarity to the little effect that some *dei ex machina* have on the outcome of their plays.

⁶⁸ The mimographers Lentulus and Hostilius are credited with a mime on *moechum Anubin* (*Anubis the Adulterer*) in Tert. *Apol.* 15.1 – unfortunately nothing is extant of this mime, and thus its possible importance for the assessment of Egyptian theology and mime cannot be examined. Tertullian presents it as still being performed in his time.

⁶⁹ Berreth (1931: 97ff.).

⁷⁰ Tragic gods intervene in the action, tell mortals to stop doing what they are about to do: *παῦσαι* IT 437, *Or.* 1625; *ἐπίσχεσ* *Hel.* 1642.—‘Der Gott greift ein und motiviert mit diesem Eingreifen zugleich sein Erscheinen. Thoas will die Geflüchteten töten, Theoklymenos seine Schwester, Ion will das Orakel befragen, Orest will Hermione töten und mit den Seinen untergehen.’ Spira (1960: 139).

Plautus, as we have seen, though experimenting with both tragic and comic genres, does not abandon his definition of the *Amphitruo* as comedy, and I would like to argue that the effect of Isis as a *dea ex machina* is primarily that of a comic deity, too—especially since the comic element in the language persists. Both in the novel and in the comedies the function of the gods is to provide the feeling that the protagonists are under the protection of the gods.

Just as tragic elements in Menander (*Aspis*, *Sikyonios*, *Perikeiromene*, or *Epitrepontes*, where explicit comparison between the Arbitration scene and the *agon* of the Euripidean *Alope* is drawn, or in other plays by Plautus (*Rudens*, *Captivi*) do not detract from an essentially comic play, the tragi-comic *Amphitruo* is still comedy, despite the appearance of high-born characters or gods on stage. Similarly the epiphany of Isis, despite some tragic elements, is ultimately seen in an essentially comic light. This does not imply that the reader is supposed to laugh at Isis, just as the audience of Menander's comedies is not supposed to laugh at Menander's prologue deities, nor, *mutatis mutandis*, Plautus' audience at the venerable figure of Ptolemy, the priestess of Venus who rescues the maidens in Plautus' *Rudens*. As in tragedy and comedy, where the gods are not intended to be scrutinized, Isis in Apuleius keeps her dignity.

12.5. THE ANTELUDIA

After Isis' first appearance the novel is not yet over, and Lucius has to face the *anteludia* ('preliminary pageant') to her *pompa* ('procession') before being re-metamorphosed (*Met.* 11.8). The purpose of the *anteludia* within the narrative is rather obscure. Even strong defenders of their Isiac links⁷¹ are at a loss to explain their nature as linked to the mysteries; others see them as a poetic retardation motif, inserted to create suspense before the re-metamorphosis.⁷² I should like to see them as reinforcing a comic interpretation, inserted as a genre-determining element between the appearance of the *dea ex machina* and her helping of Lucius.⁷³

In general these *anteludia* (the word is an Apuleian coinage) have a comic appearance rather than a serious one.⁷⁴ Griffiths (1975: ad loc. and pp. 31–47) rightly discards the various serious interpretations offered for the figures

⁷¹ Berreth's (1931: 50ff.) explanations are unconvincing.

⁷² Bernhard (1927: 282).

⁷³ Essentially non-serious and more narratological approach: Harrison (2000: 260ff.).

⁷⁴ Cf. Griffiths (1975: 173); contra Merkelbach (1963: 39f.).

referred to, and denies any Egyptian origin for them.⁷⁵ They are very tellingly described:

hic incinctus balteo militem ferebat, illum succinctum chlamide crepides et venabula venatorem fecerant, alius soccis obauratis indictus serica veste mundoque pretioso et adtextis capite crinibus incesu perfluo feminam mentiebatur.

(One had buckled on a belt, and was playing the soldier; a second had tucked up his cloak, and his high boots and spears identified him as a huntsman; a third was wearing gilded shoes, a silk gown, costly jewellery, and a wig, and was mincing along impersonating a woman.)

Other impersonations include a gladiator, a magistrate, a philosopher, a fowler, and a fisherman. Furthermore, animals dressed in human clothes are brought along. Finally, an ass with wings glued on his back led by a weak old man (*senili debili*) may represent a parody of a mythological creature: 'ut illum quidem Bellerophontem, hunc autem diceret Pegasus, tamen rideres utrumque' ('so that you might have labelled the one Pegasus and the other Bellerophon, and enjoyed a hearty laugh at both').

The man acting the soldier may recall the soldier Lucius encounters in Book 10, who is firmly characterized within the comic tradition as a *miles gloriosus*. Most interesting is the man in woman's costume. He is usually interpreted as referring back to Tlepolemus' female disguise⁷⁶ (*Met.* 7.8), when he tells the robbers a tall story about how he escaped wearing 'calceis femininis albis' ('the kind of neat white shoes which women wear'). This is, however, only marginal to the plot, and furthermore Tlepolemus says he wore sandals, not the *socci* of Book 11,⁷⁷ which may have theatrical implications: *socci* on the feet of a man pretending to be a woman may even be a distinctly comic marker. Apuleius uses the term as a metonymy for comedy elsewhere,⁷⁸ and only women and

⁷⁵ Wittmann (1938: 42) identifies the *miles* with the Egyptian god Wepwawet; Berreth (1931: 53) sees a reference to Mithras; cf. Merkelbach (1963: 40) on the general term for an initiate into the Isis cult. For the unlikelihood of various Dionysiac, Orphic, or other identifications of some of the other characters brought forth by Wittmann, Berreth (1931: 50ff.), and Merkelbach cf. Griffiths ad locc.—For a similarly sceptical view: Fick-Michel (1991: 420ff.), who identifies the soldier with the legionary of *Met.* 10.1, the hunter with Thrasyllus or Tlepolemus in 8.5, the disguised woman with Haemus' story about being disguised as a woman in *Met.* 7.8 or the Galli, the gladiator with Demochares (4.13) or Thiasos (10.18), the magistrate with Pythias (1.24), the philosopher with a negative portrait of philosophers as represented by Zatchlas (2.28), the fisherman with the seller of fish to Lucius in 1.24, and the birdcatcher with the little son of the shape-changing old man 8.20. Bears occurred already in 4.13 and 7.24, and the donkey, finally, represents Lucius himself.

⁷⁶ Harrison (2000: 260ff.).

⁷⁷ Hijmans et al. (1981: 133) for the femininity of these shoes.

⁷⁸ *Met.* 10.2: 'a socco ad coturnum ascendere' ('to rise from the comic sock to the tragic buskin'); *Flor.* 9 *socco, coturno* (in a list of literary genres), *Flor.* 16 'ioca non infra soccum' ('jokes not below the comic sock').

comic actors usually wear them.⁷⁹ Griffiths (1975: 175), without pursuing the matter further, states rightly that 'each character is presented for the sake of amusement, probably in the theatrical style.' All in all, the *anteludia* are theatrical in a wider sense, with animals and fowls representing perhaps elements of the amphitheatre entertainment, and some *personae* appear distinctly comic. They have no link with Isiac rites, nor with the following 'serious' procession of the Isis priests. The *anteludia* allow the reader to let the whole novel pass by again, symbolized by some of its characters, and their theatricality reinforces the dramatic dress of Apuleius' novel.

Apuleius clearly distinguishes these *anteludia* from the procession proper. They form a link with Lucius' past and, on a narratological level, summarize the novel until then,⁸⁰ before the important moment of re-metamorphosis: the soldier for example reflects his previous owner, the philosopher his background. Men dressing up as women with comic dresses echo comedy, where male actors take over the female roles. The fact that some of the characters recall theatre has added significance in a narratological interpretation: the novel as hitherto read is characterized in a theatrical way, and the predominant drama is comedy. This pictorial summary of the novel points towards an essentially comic interpretation. The juxtaposition of the ludicrous *anteludia* with their comic references and the serious *pompa* with the priest whose rose wreath metamorphoses Lucius into a human being again is typical of Apuleius throughout the novel.

Tragic and comic elements in the same piece are not necessarily irreconcilable. Antiquity considered what Euripides wrote as 'proper' tragedies, even if the movement was from an 'unhappy' to a 'happy' ending (Arist. *Po.* 1453a).⁸¹ Similarly, Plautus is concerned with writing 'proper' comedies, and even his *Amphitruo*, which claims to overstep the boundaries between tragedy and comedy occasionally, is still recognizably a comedy, never leaving the boundaries of the genre completely. How can Apuleius' attempt at mixing the two genres be explained, since it can be demonstrated to be a procedure spread throughout the whole of the *Metamorphoses*? Apuleius, who habitually claims he is a *philosophus Platonicus*, may have found the idea of the mingling of tragedy and comedy in his own philosophical instructor. At the end of Plato's *Symposium*, Socrates forces this remarkable argument on Agathon the

⁷⁹ Griffiths (1975: 175).

⁸⁰ Harrison (2000: 260ff.), Fick-Michel (1991: 420ff.).

⁸¹ Cf. Fusillo (1992: 271). The movement of passions in these plays is from unhappiness to happiness, cf. *Iphigenia Taurica* or *Ion*. The former starts with Iphigeneia's despair at her brother's presumed death, and Kreousa in the latter mourns her awful fate as a rape victim. The reunification of the families at the end of the dramas creates the ultimate happy ending. *Orestes*, though, despite ending in a marriage and thus according to the second hypothesis having a rather comic turning-point, is ultimately tragic.

tragedian and Aristophanes the comedian, the only ones still awake and sober enough to argue with Socrates:⁸²

προσαναγκάζειν τὸν Σωκράτη ὁμολογεῖν αὐτοὺς τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀνδρὸς εἶναι κωμωδίαν καὶ τραγωδίαν ἐπίστασθαι ποιεῖν, καὶ τὸν τέχνην τραγωδοποιὸν ὄντα <καὶ> κωμωδοποιὸν εἶναι.

(Socrates compelled them to agree that the same man who could write comedies also could write tragedies, and that a skilful writer of tragedies could also be a writer of comedies.)

This may be recalled in Apuleius' own claim in the *Florida*,⁸³ that he wrote both tragedies and comedies and most other genres, thus showing in person (or at least claiming) that he can emulate Socrates' ideal.

The novel can subsume both genres in itself because of its 'openness' (Bakhtin (1984)), and what Apuleius does is to offer opportunities for both tragedy and comedy intermittently in his novel; and he shows constantly how ambivalent they actually are, how easily one of them can be turned into its opposite. This game between expectation and uncertainty is clearly present in the treatment of Isis. During the preceding books of the novel, unexpected reversals of fate, even if they might at first look like a tragic outcome, are inserted into an essentially comic view of the world. In the first ten books, the novel's outlook is primarily comic, stressing the interchangeability of dramatic genres. But the ending seems at first glance more ambiguous.

Although coming from a very different angle from that of Winkler, the conclusions of this discussion are similar: the ambiguity Winkler finds in the novel is also expressed in the deliberate play with genres, the mixing of tragedy and comedy. Isis can be both serious as a *dea ex machina* of tragedy and a comic inversion. The context in which she is placed, however, is comic. This reflects back on the novel overall as veering between potentially comic or tragic poles, but with more pronounced comic overtones. Without reflecting on Apuleius' piety or impiety at all, the portrayal of Isis and Osiris repeatedly appearing to the gullible Lucius is comic.

12.6. CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

The end of the *Metamorphoses*, at first glance ambiguous and paratragic, is open to a serious interpretation, but it can also even throughout Book 11, be

⁸² Pi. *Smp.* 223d2ff., with Rowe (1998: ad loc.); Clay (1975).

⁸³ Cf. Ch. 3.4. above.

laughed at as a comedy, which does not exclude it from being taken as an example of the benevolent intervention of a god in the affairs of man. Tragicomedy is implied by Apuleius' constant use of dramatic images, interwoven and often enough contradicting each other. The reader's generic expectations are constantly thwarted, and turned against themselves, and this does not stop at the end of the novel. A comic novel is given a tragicomic *dea ex machina*, tragic and comic elements throughout the text are allowed to contradict each other, and the 'tragicomic' ending is set against the comic prologue. Still, the overall appearance of the novel even in Book 11—continuous Plautine language, low-life characters, and the benevolent presence of 'serious gods'—points towards a more comic reading of the novel.

Conclusion

Having established that watching and reading drama, often several genres within one single sitting, was a substantial part of Apuleius' second-century Roman élite culture, I have set about tracing the use of tragedy, comedy and mime in the different works of Apuleius. In using Seneca's tragedies and Aristophanes' and Terence's comedies in addition to the fashionable *poetae veteres*, Apuleius is much more inclusive than his contemporaries Fronto and Gellius.

It can be shown not only that his philosophical texts use Plautine language for the purposes of archaizing colour, but that dramatic quotations from several genres can be applied to illustrate various other elements of philosophical discourse, for example by integration of a dramatic quotation into the argument, or manipulation of its meaning. The dramatic genres, however, play their part amongst many other genres.

There is more concentration on drama in the more literary works of Apuleius, the *Florida*, *Apologia*, and *Metamorphoses*. As a public orator, Apuleius spoke in the theatre and thus the employment of dramatic metaphors may have come easily to him, and comedy, with its capacity to offer archaism, instruction, and above all entertainment, takes pride of place.

In the *Apologia*, Apuleius uses tragedy and mime, but mainly comedy for invective and attack on his opponents. Initial comic quotations set the scene for the fully fledged equation of the opponents' house with a comic brothel. By identifying them with blocking characters from comedy, Apuleius manages to portray his own situation in a more positive light, insinuate to the judges that he should be acquitted, and at the same time evoking the feeling of elitism, conjured up by references to ancient drama, shared between pleader and magistrates.

The most sophisticated use of drama occurs in the *Metamorphoses*, where a comic setting is created by allusion and intertextuality more than by using direct quotations from comedies or tragedies. When direct quotations occur, they may appear strangely out of context and thus add to the overall comification of the novel. The use of tragic or Plautine language and imagery instead creates the links for the reader.

From the start of the novel, Apuleius manages to create intertextuality with drama: tragedy, mime, but especially with the comedies of Plautus, with whom he constantly invites us to compare his novel linguistically. Only a few comic references are found in the *Onos*, indicating that the instances in the Latin novel are conscious Apuleian additions to the original, which is corroborated by the primary use of Latin (Plautine) comedy over other dramatic genres.

The prologue to the *Metamorphoses* at the same time emulates and defies Plautine prologue techniques, and other elements of the novel's texture follow a similar pattern. Stock characters are employed within the novel, adapted mainly from Plautine comedy, but, once their derivation from comedy is made recognizable, Apuleius starts to play with his characters and perceived generic outcomes. This is especially obvious in the treatment of Socrates and Aristomenes' story, which portrays characters who see themselves as protagonists of tragedies but bear many resemblances to low-life comedy and especially mime.

In the Risus Festival, Aristophanes' comedy is used to set the scene for Lucius' trial. Stock themes and characters, for example the marriage at the end of *Cupid and Psyche*, point towards comedy, but tragedy is also evoked constantly. Some characters move from one genre to the other, for example Psyche, whose story initially resembles Euripidean tragedy, but ends in a comic wedding. This pattern recurs in the 'Charite-complex', as Charite oscillates between being a comic and a tragic heroine. Apuleius constantly builds up expectations in his readers, and manages to thwart them at the end of the story. Charite's apparent happy and comic marriage to Tlepolemus is only a false closure, and her death is described with the help of tragedy. The portrayal of Milo's house as a *domus comica* in Book 1 has to be seen in a similar context: the characters resemble in many aspects stock characters from comedy to start with, but soon important changes to comic stock characterizations occur, and thus baffle the reader.

This switching of genres does not stop at the level of characterization. It can also be seen on a more obviously generic level in Book 10, where in the inset tales Apuleius begins to tell a tragedy, which then turns into mime, followed by a similar story which starts with comedy, but then turns into tragedy. This is echoed on the level of the main narrative, where the Pasiphae mime Lucius is about to act in ends before it ever starts, in a closural movement known from the end of a mime rather than from its beginning.

Interestingly, the only characterization which remains constant is that of Lucius, who starts off being characterized through the figure of the comic parasite, and retains his stock characteristics even when entering the service of Isis in Book 11.

The various and interchangeable genres of drama found in Book 10, probably Apuleian additions, point towards the larger addition in Book 11. Isis is a *dea ex machina*, and as such potentially tragic. The ending of a novel full of comic references thus has a paratragic note, but since *dei ex machina* also perhaps occur in mime and certainly do in comedy, Apuleius manages to continue his approach of merging genres and thus creating ambiguity. Whether Isis is a tragic (serious) or a comic (parodic) goddess of rescue cannot be decided, but because of the novel's continued use of comic language this uncertainty does not detract from the fact that the *Metamorphoses*, ultimately, can be claimed to be a comic novel.

It seems, however, that a tragedy ending in a farce to a certain extent undermines the tragedy, too. It is usually accepted that Apuleius indulges in parody of *epic* stories, for example in his portrayal of Lucius as an anti-Odysseus. He works with a similar method when he quotes from tragedy at inappropriate moments, for example when he compares Psyche's boredom for want of suitors with Medea's plight through a quotation from Ennius. Often enough, his offering of tragic quotations or allusions in the *Metamorphoses* is paratragedy rather than tragedy, which again brings Apuleius' method close to comedy.

Not only is Apuleius writing for the literary elite, but he is also rewriting a Greek original into a Latin piece, an adaptation of a somewhat coarse and straightforward story (if this is how we should perceive the lost *Metamorphoseis* of Loukios of Patrae) into a multi-layered and sophisticated novel. In such a consciously intertextual text, the addition of comic elements does not only imply added frivolity or fun, but also more literary games and sophistication.

Apuleius manipulates literature and his readers' expectations triggered by his references to earlier literature. Overall, though, the picture is that of incongruity, of the tragic heights of a tragic death such as Charite's being pulled down again by low mime. The result is more than a pastiche, but a truly disconcerting and modern novel, at one and the same time, as Winkler states, interpretable as something truly august and religious and as truly indecent and funny. Thus, I would argue, it is comic in its essentials: ancient Menandrian comedy shows death and misery to be part of life, and his comedy uses tragic intertexts to set itself off against. So does Apuleius'—comic—novel.

Apuleius thus takes the well-known image of drama as the 'simile of life' often associated with Menander, but in addition offers also an expression of the spectacular nature of both the novelistic genre and the times he lives in, immersed in theatricality. Constant addresses to his 'readers', for example, resemble the rapport Apuleius has with his audience in his sophistic speeches

in the Carthaginian theatre.¹ The enactment of several dramatic genres at the same event is a particularly Roman stage feature, and its adaptation into the novel befits Apuleius as a Roman ‘Sophist’. The oral and performative nature of this theatrical novel may perhaps throw a light on the environment in which Apuleius may have introduced his readers to his novel—a recital in a theatre would be both a conceivable and a particularly apt setting for the *Metamorphoses*.

¹ Cf. *Florida*, with Hilton (2001) in Harrison, Hilton, and Hunink (2001: 125f.), on possible interactions with audience in speeches in the theatre.

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